2020

The narrative of being houseless: lived experiences of cave dwellers

Judith Hopwood
University of Wollongong

UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

The narrative of being houseless: lived experiences of cave dwellers.

Judith Hopwood

Supervisors:
Associate Professor Jioji Ravulo
Dr Jodie Park

This thesis is presented as part of the requirement for the conferral of the degree:
Doctor of Philosophy

This research has been conducted with the support of the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship

University of Wollongong
School of Health and Society

March 2020

Abstract

"Home isn't where our house is, but wherever we are understood."
Christian Morgenstern*

Much has been written about people who are homeless and homelessness in general. From non-government organisations right up to the top echelons of Local, State and Federal government there have been services and policies commenced in the attempt to end homelessness as an entity as well as alleviate the suffering endured. There are many reasons why a person becomes homeless: childhood trauma, financial stress, lack of social housing, relationship breakdown, alcohol abuse, mental illness, drug addiction, and, dare I say it, choice. The title of the research is: *The narrative of being houseless - lived experiences of cave dwellers*. The research presented to the reader in this study attempts to illustrate life experiences within a houseless community of cave dwellers in an isolated village along the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales. The focus of the study is one woman in particular, but it is her interactions with other people in the communities with which she communicates that is captured by the instruments of the research. It is the interpretation of these interactions that constitutes the lived experiences observed. The researcher has undertaken a qualitative study incorporating an ethnographic approach utilising a narrative inquiry design. The research bricolage included the use of formal and informal interviews, journal entries, direct observations, photographs and purposeful conversations. Whilst there are a myriad of articles and documents about the issue of homelessness, there remains surprises and more to learn - this research goes some way to increase understanding of the phenomenon. By exploring the experiences of the woman, great insight was obtained into her identity, and about her coping mechanisms and her attitude to her life in a cave. It was necessary to include a wide data input so that a more valid picture emerged.

KEY WORDS: homeless, houseless, qualitative, ethnography, narrative, identity, trauma, chameleon, policy, advocacy

*Quote taken from a posthumous collection of aphorisms (Stages: a development in aphorisms and diary notes) published in 1918.

Acknowledgments

In pondering the period of the current study, there are a number of people I need to acknowledge as having contributed in a significant manner towards the completion of such a piece of research. To my mind, the most important are the homeless/houseless people of Brooklyn, especially the main participants B and W. To have had permission to enter into the lives of such unique and special people was both amazing and poignant at the same time. I grew so much throughout the time I spent with them. I also wish to acknowledge Jioji Ravulo and Jodie Park, my wonderful Supervisors. They had belief in my ability, at the beginning of 2019, to enable my acceptance into the University of Wollongong, when the progress of my study was somewhat fractured. I felt complete faith in their guidance and their advice and thank them sincerely. I need to mention Vivienne, Phil and Don who, prior to 2019, led me in increments to a point where I understood the relevance of the type of study I was undertaking, and showed me commitment to learning, seminal influences and excellence in theory. People who agreed to be interviewed (JJJ, TR and JA) for the research have illustrated their tremendous diligence in advocacy, historical relevance, and holistic care of the individual. You all understand homelessness and I greatly appreciate your words. The impact of the Hornsby Kuring-gai Homelessness Task Force also deserves recognition – the important work of this group cemented much commitment and awareness into the efforts to assist people of disadvantage. To my family, who walked the journey with me over the years of immersion in the project, I say a huge thank you – in particular I mention Jessica and Craig, and Ashleigh and Marcus, and Peter and Ashlee. A special mention must be made of Amelie and Holly, young women who have made an invaluable contribution to the overall project. And also of Billie, who works with homeless women, and every day sees 'the strength and resilience they exhibit in the face of extreme adversity'. Finally, my incredible editor, Denis Whitfield, who, with tremendous patience and expertise, guided the final piece of work to completion.

Certification

I, Judith Hopwood, declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the conferral of the degree Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

_____

Judith Hopwood

7 March 2020

Preface

INSIDE/OUTSIDE

I'd like to know who listens
occasionally,
from the inside of you.
I would like to crawl into
your silence
and watch what colors you spin
while I talk
and listen
and wonder how it is you operate.

I only see the outer reaction –
the laugh
or blank stare
or the amazing speed
you're capable of when your thoughts
sprint out.

What lies within the restless wanderer
when your mind races thru life
but stalls in visible production?

Why should I expect you to be any different
than me?
Perhaps it is that
the mental silence seems so much
longer at 39 than 7.

And since I don't remember
how it was then –
I watch you to remind
me
how it is
inside of you.

Susan R. Anderson
Des Moines, Iowa

Anderson, SR 1989, Inside/outside, *Language Arts*, vol. 66, no. 7, p. 711.

[I include this poem to provide valuable illumination on the research process undertaken, to gather meaningful, yet valid, information in the field.]

List of Names

B	MAIN PARTICIPANT
W	HUSBAND TO B
R	researcher
JJJ	advocate
TR	local historian
JA	nurse manager
JK	podiatrist
AA	sister to B; recently homelessness – was living in a Brooklyn cave
FFF	homeless man; W Best Man; living in a boat on the river
XXX	homeless man; gave B away at her wedding – living in social housing
Y	homeless woman – living in another Brooklyn cave
Z	homeless man – living in another Brooklyn cave
M	homeless man – living on a Brooklyn Council verandah

List of Abbreviations

ABI	Acquired Brain Injury
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACOSS	Australian Council of Social Service
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CBD	Central Business District
FACS	Family and Community Services
FEANTSA	European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless
GP	General Practitioner
HHTF	Hornsby Homelessness Task Force
HKHTF	Hornsby Kuring-gai Homelessness Task Force
HSC	Hornsby Shire Council
LAC	Local Area Command
LGA	Local Government Area
MP	Member of Parliament
PO	Post Office
RFS	Rural Fire Service
SHNS	Sydney Home Nursing Service
WHO	World Health Organisation

Dedication

To my grandchildren who are here – Gracie, Finn and Archie – and those who are yet to arrive. I love you all. Gma.

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Diagrams

Figures:

Diagrams:

Chapter 1

STORIES FROM THE EDGE

"Lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research."
van Manen (1990)

1.1. Foreword

A chameleon is an extraordinary lizard equipped with a number of useful attributes. It has four layers of skin. The colour change of a chameleon occurs due to the need for camouflage but is also used as a means to signal a communication in social situations as well as a response to temperature and other conditions. The mechanism of the colour change is complex. The evolution of this unique ability is not entirely understood, but scientists are sure that chameleon utilisation of colour change gives surety to the signal to be conveyed, that is, it can be seen clearly in the environment in which it is exhibited. It is known that chameleons in well-lit areas showed similar, bright signals but chameleons in more drab areas showed signals of greater contrast. The feet of the chameleon are interesting from the perspective of five toes being grouped in two or three prong-like structures. This type of foot enabled the chameleon to grip more effectively and tightly to narrow branches. There is a sharp claw on each toe to allow better climbing on surfaces such as bark. Some chameleons have a row of spikes along their spines. These add to camouflage ability by breaking up the visible outline of the body of the chameleon therefore enabling a degree of blending. The eyes are very distinctive because they can pivot and independently focus on two different objects at the same time. Chameleon eyesight is very good, hearing is well-developed, and, with an exceptionally long tongue, they can rapidly capture food from a substantial distance to themselves. Chameleons largely live in forests and scrub land. These lizard characteristics are present for the survival of the species. When considering human survival, are such characteristics similarly adopted? The work of this research project will examine a life of

marginalisation and stigma where the participant appears to survive in the face of great adversity. Let me tell you a story…

1.2. Introduction: a brief overview

The experience I am about to unfold is one of fascination, complexity and unique characteristics. It is not every day that a person is exposed to a way of life that is so incredible and unbelievable that it compels the observer to gather information in order to make sense of what is taking place. Over time, the observation leads to a question (and series of questions) about a way of life and the people who are part of one special community. This is how a desire for further examination of the intricacies of a group of homeless individuals living along a river in caves came to be a research project.

For a very long time I have been vitally interested in homelessness, and this had led to looking intently at the region in which I was living – a Local Government Area (LGA) in Sydney, New South Wales, that has large tracts of bushland interspersed with built-up areas of single- and multi-level dwellings - known as the Hornsby Shire. The area includes a massive river – the Hawkesbury - with smaller villages and residences along its shores and islands. It is in one of these villages, almost at the mouth of the mighty river, and definitely part of the history of the region, that my interest became focussed on a small community of people, defined as homeless by authorities, who lived in caves. These rocky dwellings were ‘home’ to a number of individuals who existed in parallel with the general community of the village. The name of this village is Brooklyn.

The Hornsby LGA, where I was a resident, and for a time the elected local New South Wales State Member of Parliament (MP) for the Hornsby Electorate that geographically covers the Shire, was ‘home’ to many homeless people. The local major shopping centre, for example, saw daily examples of individuals living ‘rough’ in its mall – they would be sitting alongside banking institutions and retail shops, either minding their own affairs, or displaying signs telling

passers-by that they had desperate needs or, indeed, they were trying to sell various items to make money. As I came to realise, they also walked, invisibly, among the other shoppers and business people, nobody realising they had nowhere to live. The Hornsby Shire Library catered for many in the community, including a number of the 'homeless', all seeking refuge in the library for information or shelter – or both. I frequented this library and on numerous occasions witnessed homeless persons sitting in armchairs reading the newspapers or books and accessing the available computer technology. Sometimes, thankfully rarely, I saw blatant discrimination against them by staff.

Other parts of the Shire also 'catered' for homeless people. The many parks, particularly those close to the main Central Business District (CBD) of Hornsby, had benches and areas of seclusion (trees and buildings) where homeless people sought cover or sleeping quarters, and to which they might regularly return and be in residence for an extended period. I became aware that some homeless people residing as such had been, on occasions, issued with 'eviction' notices, requiring them to vacate the makeshift 'home' they had made. On one occasion the recipient of such a notice was sent into a spiral of worsening mental ill-health that necessitated an urgent admission to the Hornsby Hospital mental health facility. A local entity, the Hornsby Country Women's Association (CWA), was particularly sympathetic to such people, allowing them to 'camp' overnight under the awning near the front entrance of their hall, and to utilise an outdoor toilet and its associated water supply. This was in contrast to the Council-managed park spaces where the tap handles had been removed. Yet other people 'of no fixed address' made camps (shanty-looking creations) within the National Park areas. And others lived in cars or under the rooves of garages and the like. Many of the homeless folk had dogs, not an uncommon sight for homelessness wherever it may be located.

The makeup of the LGA included a major road (the M1) through its breadth, as well as an almost parallel train line (the Main North railway). The latter was of particular use to homeless people because they could travel from the Sydney CBD to a much safer (by comparison) area in which to live, and be more inconspicuous as well. This train line went through Brooklyn village (the

Hawkesbury River Station) and so provided a valuable means for the river dwellers to get to Gosford, and to Hornsby and various places that contained services or other requirements. Conversely, the trains provided a number of homeless people with a warm and safe temporary home.

And so a picture is painted, in a fashion, to attempt to illustrate the environment in which I, as the researcher, lived, as well as the homeless people who became the focus of my curiosity and observation. The number of homeless individuals was very difficult to ascertain in such an area given the nature of the suburbs and the terrain. The number of files on homeless people, being held by local non-government organisations, far exceeded the homeless numbers as had been determined by Census data and organised counts. Many homeless people sought almost total seclusion, and the Hornsby LGA could well accommodate this because approximately half of the Hornsby Electorate at least was bushland. The types of homelessness portrayed in the LGA was such that I decided to more closely focus on the cave dwellers in Brooklyn. This was because the differences in the types of homelessness were, as I discovered, numerous. And so, my research question rested on a number of these cave dwellers that I first termed 'homeless' because they fitted the definition, as well as the policies designed to attempt to alleviate their plight. I was soon to realise that I was interacting with people who were 'houseless'. I will explain the differentiation of the two terms shortly.

This chapter will seek to provide the reader with an overview of my research journey, to set the scene for more in-depth explanations in the following chapters. I will refer to the chapters as I progress through descriptions of the research and what it entails.

At the very beginning of my research experience, I had arrived at the subject of homelessness, this according to my own personal worldview – empathetic attitude, nursing experience, social justice concerns, career choices that placed me in direct contact with homeless people, and the belief that there was a dearth of meaningful information about some aspects of homelessness in the reading I had thus far undertaken. This is a brief reference to the influences

that assisted me to choose my subject that will be more fully described later. My tacit knowledge also informed my choice. Initially I had a very naïve perspective of what I believed I would be able to investigate in relation to homelessness. In my naivety I had planned to select numerous homeless people from across a wide geographical area, and these potential participants (park sleepers, people residing in shopping malls, those who lived in their cars, cave dwellers existing in an isolated geographical terrain) would be approached to provide me with responses to various methods I would decide upon to gather data. I grappled with the overarching question I wanted to answer, and soon realised it would be impossible to achieve such a wide-ranging scope of geography and types of homeless people. The frustrations I had felt in relation to the application of current policies for the management and ending of homelessness resurfaced, because I had a very sudden realisation that each homeless person had their own set of circumstances, some so diverse that it would be very difficult to combine them in a study let alone a policy scenario. They were, in fact, unique individuals with unique wants and needs. The reality was that I likened my initial idea of a large number of participants to comparing 'chalk with cheese'.

Hence, this realisation saw me narrow down my focus to one area and a group of homeless people who were more 'alike'. I decided to choose the village of Brooklyn and its surrounds (in the north of the Hornsby Local Government Area) because of the chronic nature of the homeless people who resided there – many lived in the caves under the headland above Brooklyn village. As I have already stated, Brooklyn sits beside the Hawkesbury River on the southern side of this massive waterway. I knew enough about chronic homelessness to know that these people were amongst the most disadvantaged, and had more issues associated with their health and wellbeing than others. In my reading I became aware that the chronically homeless, whilst mentioned regularly in literature, had not had the depth of inquiry that other areas of homeless disadvantage had. Parsell (2014), a Queensland academic, supports this belief. He also suggests that not enough has been offered to chronic homeless people to alleviate their disadvantage. In fact, the Australian Government, via the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), stated in 2012:

> There is a lack of comprehensive national data about the health needs of people experiencing homelessness. However, a range of information sources indicate that homeless people tend to have high and complex health-care needs, and may under-use health services relative to their needs.

It would most likely be true to say that homeless people did not access any services to the extent that could meet all their needs. This would be something I wanted to assess in my study. Indeed, my research, which would look at a number of facets in a chronic homelessness scenario, could become a 'brick in the research wall' on the subject.

In scrutinising the Brooklyn precinct, I realised that the nature of the village, the numbers of homeless people, the history of the area and the relationship the homeless had with aspects of the Brooklyn village, would assist my research to become achievable. A very pertinent reason for this was that I was likely to be able to access a number of the homeless residents, in my quest to gather participants, due to the presence of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre (Fig. 1) and the relationship a number of the homeless people had with its staff. This health centre had been in existence for a few decades and had been deemed necessary due to the location of Brooklyn being over thirty kilometres from the main Hornsby CBD, and a significant number of essential services. By coincidence, when I was working for Sydney Home Nursing Service (SHNS) in the early 1990s, a research project had been undertaken to look at issues associated with health crises in Brooklyn, and why people did not access services until their issues reached a critical point. The health centre had been recommended and constructed, and it proved to be a vital resource for the local community, whereby General Practitioners (GPs) and nursing and ancillary staff alike tended to the needs of the communities they served – and this went past health and included food and general information as well. Homeless people could access showers, and a large open hall area would often be used to enable the homeless to speak to housing and social services personnel, to name but a few.

Fig 1: Brooklyn Community Health Centre - please note the water bowl provided for dogs

Giving consideration to the chosen qualitative paradigm, that I will discuss in the next section, I developed a question that would include a number of homeless people from the chosen site. Following ethics approval and decisions about the methodology and methods, my data collection commenced. I was soon forced to amend my revised question to focus not on the entire homeless population in Brooklyn, but initially on two participants and a specified geographical region, being almost entirely the village of Brooklyn. For a variety of reasons, that will be explained, further amendments of the over-arching question occurred, and my question became:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of one woman living in a houseless community?

This decision may appear to be unusual given a potentially large cohort of participants, but for practical and realistic reasons my question came to include a single individual. This participant was a woman living in a cave under the Brooklyn headland with her husband. Her name is 'B' for the purposes of the research. Given the desire many homeless people to live in seclusion, if I was to gather data, I needed to be able to have a reasonable communication opportunity. In selecting B and her husband (who will be known as 'W'), I

believed I would have a good chance of establishing a dialogue and collecting useful data. The following sections will contain arguments that will defend and support this decision.

1.2.1. Paradigm

A qualitative research paradigm was undertaken for the research. This paradigm was preferred for my research due to the very nature of the subject, that is homelessness (and, as I came to realise, houselessness). I decided upon a topic that was concerned with a human being living in a capacity about which more needed to be known and understood. In many ways the chosen participant was a mystery and, as such, the qualitative approach was most suited to assist my research to discover her in the context of her lived experience (Punch 2013). Homelessness is often regarded at an arm's length, if it is noticed at all, and there is substantial evidence that many in the community do not understand homelessness (McNaughton 2008; Robinson 2011; Johnson & Jacobs 2014) and may even be afraid of homeless people. Stigma, rejection and marginalisation occur on a regular basis. The study was to be undertaken through the lens of sociology (McNaughton 2008; Robinson 2014) because I would be examining social behaviour and what could be determined as social problems.

To undertake my data collection, I would need to be in the field, and to have the ability to engage B in conversation. I would need to utilise specific methods as the means to collect the data. There was a strong element of disadvantage and serious social issues within the community in which B lived, yet she stayed in a cave parallel to, but separate from, the small village of Brooklyn where some services to assist her were located. It would be of interest to discover why it was she continued to live in a cave so close to the general community and where there were willing people to help her out of her 'homeless' state.

Creswell (2013, p. 23) supports the use of qualitative research when there is an emphasis on social justice, which was very much the case with this study, and

when there are a number of areas from which valuable data must be gathered if an accurate picture of the circumstances of the subject is to be had. He refers to these areas as "threads" and states (2013, p. 42) "like the loom on which fabric is woven, general assumptions and interpretative frameworks hold qualitative research together." In the course of my data collection, and analysis of same, I would need to do what Creswell (2013, p. 272) describes as "restorying", whereby I would compile the data I had collected from the methods by which it had been gathered, and then record this data to tell the stories of the lives I was witnessing. I would have to apply a degree of interpretation of what I observed, and what B (and others) may tell me in order to do this. I would also rely on a thorough literature evaluation (as will be discussed in Chapter Two).

My aim was not to try to prove a theory, but to attempt to understand B and her lived experience with the anticipated result of answering my posed question. To realise this goal, I would seek to gather enough rich data so that I could accurately interpret the lives I was observing (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). They (2011, p. 8) argue that:

> The word *qualitative* implies an emphasis on the qualities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry.

Because I did not know what I did not know, the manner in which I planned my research and the methods used would give reference to my tacit knowledge and would help me to uncover valuable information about B and her life. These methods may need to be altered over the time of the research period to accommodate unexpected issues arising, or the emergence of data that required different types of investigation.

1.2.2. Who is 'B'?

At this point it will be helpful if I briefly introduce my participant and give a short

background of her life that will be enlarged upon in later chapters. B was, at the commencement of the research, aged in her early fifties, and a woman who had been considered homeless for a number of years. She was born in Victoria and had a number of siblings. In adult life, due to circumstances related to an apartment fire, she became homeless and initially lived in a tent. Over time B moved to Brooklyn and took up residence in one of the caves under the headland at Brooklyn. She had been engaged to a homeless man who died in tragic circumstances. Whilst in Brooklyn, following the death, she met and lived with another homeless man, this being W, and they subsequently married in the park immediately above their cave home. I knew of the couple before their wedding and, once I had approval to do so, conducted research that included their lives in the cave, in the homeless community and in the wider village of Brooklyn. The following is a reflective narration about one of the first times I saw B:

> Early to mid-2013:- I was shopping in Kmart recently and minding my own business when I looked up to see B looking through the women's clothing section. She was almost unrecognisable from the last time I had seen her – dressed in bright shorts and top. Perhaps I judged her appearance a few weeks prior because I had met her in a very different environment: an environment of homelessness, in other words, her homeless state. Her dress then was darker and more covered-up. Now she was almost walking on air and I wondered if she had been given some money to spend on herself. She appeared to be choosing summer outfits and took a few garments to the checkout before she walked quickly out of the store.

I came to utilise three titles for B's communities, the 'general' community, the 'homeless' community and the 'trusted' community. These will be more fully explained at a later point in the thesis. I knew of B for a number of months before my research officially commenced. During this time, I observed B and her husband exchange vows at their wedding (pre-data). Whilst I was collecting data, I also attended the funeral of W who died approximately 18 months following the marriage ceremony.

1.2.3. Themes

Homeless people attract curiosity and attention from onlookers, and this includes the media. There appears to be a division between what the onlookers see as the attributes of being homeless and how the homeless see themselves. Min (ed. 1999, p. (ii)) states:

> The image of the homeless…has not been entirely accurate. They have been portrayed as drunk, stoned, crazy, sick, and drug abusers by the media and by many social science researchers. Although the portrayal is partly accurate, these images are indeed obstacles in better understanding the homeless.

In order to attempt to evaluate homeless lives, observation of lived experience should provide the insight that cursory glances cannot. The close examination of qualitative research is necessary, and identifying certain themes within the observation should assist discovery.

In this study of lived experience, the most obvious themes were that of identity, self and the social construction of reality. The portrayal of life in a homeless community was centred in and around the geography of the area; this space and place was of significance, whereby people considered to be homeless had chosen a series of caves in which to live, under a headland adjacent to a small village. The choice of a cave gave them the option of a 'dwelling' that provided some protection from the elements, and also access to certain services and necessities for the conduct of their lives. Of course, the other consideration of the theme of 'choice' was whether they 'chose' to be homeless in the first place. A more hidden theme was that of trauma. It was only by development of a trusting relationship between the researcher and the participant that information about the nature and extent of trauma would be realised.

There are two themes that were not initially very obvious. The first was that of the dichotomy between 'homelessness versus houselessness'. This perhaps is not easy to appreciate given the subject matter of my research, but as I progressed through the data collection the entity of being houseless (as

opposed to being homeless) emerged as a most important aspect of the study. The participants did not 'see' themselves as 'homeless', merely 'houseless' because they had a cave home. The second theme was related to the ability of my participant to survive in an environment and with people who were at times unreliable, unpredictable and desperate. As I came to know B better (following conversations, interviews and general observation) I began to see a distinct pattern in the way in which she interacted with her outside world. This, too, could be construed to be a dichotomy, or, as I preferred to categorise it, a 'chameleon-like' use of attributes with which to deal with all of the aspects of B's day-to-day life.

1.2.4. Methodology

Once I had decided on the overarching research question it was then I applied a methodology (which will be more fully described in Chapter Three) to my project within the paradigm of qualitative research. I initially believed I would pursue a grounded theory approach as this appeared to fit with the methodology I would choose to gather data. However, as time went by, it became clear that a partial ethnographic approach informed by narrative inquiry would be more appropriate. This would facilitate studying the lived experience of one homeless woman living in a cave within a homeless community. Creswell (2013, p. 70) argues that narrative applies not only to the collection of information, it can also apply to the way in which the data is presented and interpreted. He explains it by stating (p. 70):

> The procedures for implementing this research consist of focussing on studying one or two individuals, gathering data through the collection of their stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences.

Creswell (2013, p. 71) also says that the human stories are collected through many varied forms of data, or methods. Wilson and Hutchinson (1991, pp. 269-270) state "in hermeneutics research, the number of informants varies. Ten to 20 is usually sufficient, yet one could do an interesting study with one verbal, articulate informant." Hence I selected one participant from whom I would seek

to collect data with reference to narrative inquiry, and utilise an interpretive approach to draw out meanings from the collected stories and observations made. The woman would be the prime focus, but I would require a wider cohort from whom to collect data so that an accurate picture of her life could be acquired.

1.2.5. Methods

The methods I planned to incorporate into my research process were:

- Informal conversations with B
- General observation of the Brooklyn precinct (field work and journal)
- General observation of B and her interactions (journal)
- Provision of a diary for B (and her husband W) to record their daily routine/thoughts
- Art paper and art pastels for B to express herself in that medium
- Informal interviews with B (and W) – semi-structured
- Provision of disposable cameras for B (and W) to use
- Attendance at important events involving B
- Interviews/conversations with significant others associated with Brooklyn and the participants

Unfortunately, the provision of diaries and art paper did not produce any results. Despite the fact that B was an artist (one of her paintings adorned a cave wall) she did not provide me with any drawings that depicted her life. Likewise, her husband (W) was an avid reader of non-fiction (five books per week) and yet he did not provide any written word evidence about his thoughts and experiences. The provision of cameras was predominantly used by B to take photos of her peers and her surroundings. The most successful data gathering occurred with recorded interviews (that were later transcribed), and interviews with other significant people. I gathered written observations/experiences in the journal and field notes. These detailed the ‘stories’ of B in her current and past life.

The interviews, conversations, and observations became the basis for the narrative accounts of B's lived experience. Once compiled in some form of chronological and logical sequence (that will be seen in Chapters Four and Five) these narratives were analysed (Chapter Six). From these analyses a number of recommendations would be made (Chapter Seven).

1.2.6. Data presentation

I consider Chapters Four and Five, the detailing of all the data I collected in an assembled form, to be the crux of my thesis. I humbly note that I was in an extremely privileged position to be able to literally be a 'part' of the life of B as well as the experiences of others whose lives intersected with that of B. The data presentation describes previously unchartered lived experiences of homeless/houseless people. It describes unique past life occurrences, some of which directly led to happenings within the research timeframe. It also provides information about the identity of the participant and how she survived the harsh lifestyle. I had the unique opportunity to not only view their wedding in the park immediately above their cave, but also to visit the cave where B and her husband had lived, and to attend the funeral of W, B's husband of only 18 months. In relation to the visit to the cave, this occurred when the couple agreed to be interviewed by a television station and I was invited to observe. This couple had no problem with media exposure and were the subject of a number of newspaper articles. The data will be presented as blocks of narrative, direct quotes from journals, field work and interviews, as well as observations made by the researcher of aspects of the lives studied.

1.2.7. Data analysis

The data analysis, following extensive collection of examples of the lived experience I had observed, will refer to the assembled narrative, intertwined with explanations (I refer the reader to Chapter Six). My understanding of sociological phenomena, and aspects of homelessness, assisted me to write

narrative detailing this lived experience and was taken from the variety of sources already described over more than one year of being in the field. I was able to logically extract information from the 'threads' of observed lived experience that highlighted B's social interaction and decision making. The relevant literature also assisted me to construct and analyse the narrative I had recorded. In the reporting of the findings I utilised a dialogical narrative analysis. Blix, Hamran and Normann (2013, p. 268) state (according to Frank (2005) "dialogical narrative analysis 'studies the mirroring between what is told in the story – the story's content – and what happens as a result of telling that story – its effects'." They stress that (p. 268) interpreting the information in the narrations "is informed by the knowledge developed through engagement with the stories of all the participants in the study."

1.3. A summary: the storied interweaving of people, process and past research

As has been alluded to, I commenced my research journey desiring to investigate homelessness across a Local Government Area. To this end, I sought project to answer the following question:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of and perceptions held by a number of homeless people in one Local Government Area?

Due to the difficulty (if not practical impossibility) with comparing many different types of homeless people, in the early stages of planning my methodology I decided to focus on one type of homelessness, that of cave dwellers. The question then changed to:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of a homeless couple in one Local Government Area?

Initial observation of this local homeless couple (a man and a woman) allowed me to ponder certain questions about the nature of their lives, that is, their 'lived experience' (van Manen 1990; McNaughton 2008; Robinson 2011; Martin 2014), and

what caused them to become homeless and how they negotiated often challenging circumstances. This reflection led me to formally enter the research path where I sought to transfer the possession of "tacit knowledge into an emerging explicit theoretical knowledge" (Guba & Lincoln 1989, p. 176) in relation to homelessness.

The following additional questions were formulated to further unpack this focus:

1. Why have they chosen this particular area in which to live?
2. How do they perceive themselves as part of their individual existence, their homeless environment and the wider village community?
3. How do the patterns and perceptions of the daily lives of the homeless reflect their sense of 'being'?
4. Why do these people live in the manner in which they do?
5. Do they consider the site in which they live as a 'home'?

When the study was underway, the focus of the data collection moved from the couple to predominantly the woman. This largely occurred because the man died (from natural causes) in the course of the research. The question then became:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of one woman living in a homeless community?

The interaction of the woman with others in the homeless community (including her partner whilst he was alive) as well as with the people in the village, and significant others in the wider community, provided very necessary insight and enough valuable information for the project to proceed as planned.

Following the research path, and after significant contact with and observation of the participants, I came to realise that my question had become:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of one woman living in a houseless community?

As will be detailed, the change from the word 'homeless' to 'houseless' was a

discovery related to the iterative nature of my research model, and to the data I collected and the observations that I made.

1.3.1. The site

As has already been referred to, the site of the 'lived experience' research of this couple was a small homeless community, situated on the outskirts of a village known as Brooklyn, in the north of Sydney. I will be further enlarging upon the nature and features of this site in Chapter Four. Apparently there have been decades of homeless people accessing shelter in this bushland setting, living rough in caves, doorways, boats, containers, as well as street benches and parklands generally. The history of the area also lent itself to the study of the continuing existence of people living 'rough' in the vicinity – from early settlers to those involved in the construction of major infrastructure, many had lived in tents or similar in the Brooklyn environs. The 'lived experience' approach I would be utilising, that is, giving meaning to day-to-day lives (van Manen 1990), was deemed to be the most appropriate method because "individuals who experience homelessness, will have multifaceted identities, motivations and experiences" (McNaughton 2006, p. 139). The site was intricately involved with the day-to-day lives of homeless people in the Brooklyn precinct and added to their range of life happenings. Thus I sought to collect data about these phenomena by being situated myself in the actual environment in which my research would take place, in order to interpret this homeless existence, using a variety of tools appropriate to capturing and explaining their lives. With regard to methodology, as I have mentioned, I utilised a partial ethnographic approach, informed by narrative inquiry and included 'hermeneutic phenomenology' that van Manen (1990) defines as a science that focusses on the study of people and how they live their lives. In other words, the research sought to collect the 'stories' and interpret the daily lives and experiences of the homeless couple, and then the woman, within the site in which they spent their days. Researching the 'lived experience' aims to view the many interconnected aspects of peoples' lives. Of relevance is van Manen (1990, p. 5) who stresses it is important to remember that this type of

study is:

> …to construct a full interpretive description of some aspect of the life world, and yet to remain aware that lived life is always more complex than any explication of meaning can reveal.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is doing far more than describing life events; it aims to place and unpack the meaning of human lives in relation to being, the concept of self, and identity. The site is very much related to how I would come to understand these people in the conduct of their lives.

1.3.2. The Emergent Design

I utilised a conceptual 'emergent design' (Christie, Montrosse & Klein 2005: Plano Clark & Badiee 2010) to provide a diagrammatic overview of the research process I would be undertaking (as shown in Chapter Three). Such a design would assist my progression through the research as well as enable the reader of my study to grasp key areas in the flow of the study. The emergent nature of the design would enable flexibility and, as the data collection progressed, it would allow questions to be formulated based on what had gone before. It would also facilitate the evaluation of my research. This would take the reader from the very origins of decisions taken to commence the research, through the establishment of propositional knowledge, into the collection and the analysis of the data, then forward into answers and conclusions (Chapters Six and Seven).

1.3.3. Reference to other theses and writings on the subject of homeless

There are many examples of theses that have been dedicated to researching the subject of homelessness. Whilst I have read a number, I want to mention four and focus on two in particular.

Dewana Hall wrote her doctoral thesis titled "A phenomenological inquiry of chronic homeless individuals' challenges to independence" in 2010. This work

looked at homelessness in an eastern state in the United States of America, researching four homeless men living in a mission and delving into their life experiences. The research revealed common themes of childhood abuse and mental health issues. The existence of traumatic experiences in early life are very often found in the lives of homeless people.

A 2002 United Kingdom PhD thesis by Helen Cramer, titled “Engendering homelessness: an ethnographic study of homeless practices in a post-industrial city”, sought to examine the extent to which homelessness was a phenomenon of gender. This research revealed that there was a difference between the provision of help and support to men as opposed to women. Whilst service providers generally felt that homeless women were more vulnerable than homeless men, this belief did not translate to better government service options for women. In terms of B, it would be interesting to evaluate her strengths or otherwise and whether her gender had any bearing on her lived experiences.

In Australia, Cameron Parsell wrote his PhD thesis (“An ethnographic study of the day-to-day lives and identities of people who are homeless in Brisbane”) in 2010. In his work, homeless people were observed and interviewed to examine the belief that they were ascribed with identities on the basis of their homelessness. Parsell aimed to provide his participants with an opportunity to have a voice, so that ‘who they are as people’ could be accurately recorded. Parsell’s important aim in seeking to reveal the real attributes of homeless individuals, and not the stereotype often attached to them, was to improve homelessness practice and policy development.

A 2010 PhD thesis titled “Governing homelessness: the discursive and institutional construction of homelessness in Australia”, by Jane Bullen, is of special interest with regard to its focus on government and how decisions about homeless people are made. Bullen researched the changes in the manner in which homelessness was viewed over decades, and how this reflected in the undertaking of policy-making, and the way in which services were implemented. She observed that the ‘governmentality’ of how homeless people were assisted, changed from one of ‘structural’, that is, outside factors influenced whether a person became homeless, to ‘personal’, where it was the individual who was responsible for their own

homelessness.

I also need to make mention of two books written by authors who have closely researched the homeless experience and from whom I have gained valuable insight into the subject. Carol McNaughton wrote “Transitions through homelessness: lives on the edge” in 2008 and this details the trajectory of homeless people in the United Kingdom in attempting to move out of homelessness and the inherent risks in doing so. In 2011 Catherine Robinson published her book titled “Homelessness felt and lived: beside one’s self”, an insightful look at what it means to be homeless from the perspective of displacement and alienation and where service gaps occur that impact on the homeless person. These works informed my research from the perspective of data collection and analysis.

In relation to my research, and especially with reference to the research of Parsell and Bullen, because they were undertaken in the Australian context, I arrived at the use of the word ‘houseless’ and not ‘homeless’ which I believe is an extension of these studies. Whilst the cave dwellers in Brooklyn fitted the accepted definition of homelessness, they did not see themselves as homeless, merely houseless. Their home was a cave. I will return to the work of these, and other scholars, in the analysis and conclusion chapters.

A further aspect of my subject matter is the time spent as a local New South Wales State Member of Parliament (2002-2011) and two Interns I supervised during this period. In 2008 Aimee Cornelius, an undergraduate university student, undertook a research project over a six-month period on the subject of homelessness in the Hornsby area as well as in Australia generally. Cornelius incorporated a multi-faceted investigation of current homelessness data in Australia, as well as local data, the activities of government and non-government entities, and looked at overseas experiences. She found that whilst governments spoke of reducing the number of homeless people, the reality was the numbers had not decreased. Cornelius recommended that it was imperative to take immediate action to counteract homelessness. At the time of her report, there was no specific priority action plan being undertaken by the NSW Government. Evrithiki Diinis, another undergraduate university student, in

2009 commenced a study into domestic violence. She looked at the prevalence of domestic violence on a federal, state and local level. She also examined government and other responses to the issue. Her work was related to homelessness in the community because of the high number of women becoming homeless due to the imperative to flee a family situation resulting from violence inflicted upon them. Amongst other recommendations, Diinis believed more housing should be made available so that women escaping domestic violence would not become homeless.

1.4. Narrative beginnings

The phenomenon of homelessness has been extensively written about, but very rarely from the perspective of the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the homeless themselves about their lives; even less from the perspective of those chronically homeless people living 'rough' in the Australian experience. And even more rare, from the viewpoint of people living in caves. According to Coleman and Fopp (2014) the entity of homelessness has always been present in Australia, seen from early colonial days and going through a number of phases to present day.

Homelessness Australia (2013) notes that "Australians experiencing homelessness are often excluded from participating in social, recreational, cultural and economic opportunities in their communities." This marginalisation had the effect of often making them separate to general society, as well as denying their ability to contribute to conversations about the issue of homelessness. Frank (2013, p. xiii) speaks of "silence*"* in relation to disease, and believes that it is better not to be silent when it comes to the need to tell a story about a particular health event. He also refers to *chaos* and describes this as existing when poor health causes unemployment, issues with keeping a home and perhaps other health catastrophes. Frank (2013, p. xv) links silence to the chaos of a life event like illness and states:

> Those living in chaos are least able to tell a story, because they lack any sense of a viable future. Life is reduced to a series of present-tense assaults. If a narrative involves temporal progression, chaos is anti-narrative.

Homelessness can be aligned to these statements. An observer looking in on a homeless existence will most likely view what they interpret as 'chaos'. There does not appear to be any system or order present in the lives of homeless persons. The element of 'silence' is also perceived. The homeless do not appear to have a voice and often sit behind stigma and liminal existence. This is usually felt by the homeless as powerlessness, and delivery of a lack of options in their lifestyle. My research will hopefully provide a view into the lived experience of the homeless to determine what this might entail and to analyse if chaos does exist. The research will also give a voice to the participants so that there is not silence about their lives. Min (ed. 1999, p. (ii)) supports this by stating "it is essential to allow the homeless describe their conditions in their own discourses to provide a more accurate and balanced depiction of the homeless."

As already stated, there appears to be a dearth of written information about how individuals feel about being homeless; researchers have not delved greatly into how feelings might link to the disadvantage and challenges of living as a homeless person. Davidson, Bondi and Smith (2007, p. 7) state "although highlighting the emotionally troubling hardships and injustices caused by inequalities and oppressions, researchers have not generally considered how emotions might underpin them." McNaughton (2006, p. 139) has a similar view and states "…there has been little research exploring homeless people's own definition of what homelessness is and how they encapsulate it." To enlarge upon this, more work is needed to be undertaken when the definitions of chronic homelessness appear to be inadequate and homeless people are homogenised into one entity (Parsell 2014). The space gives the appearance of being somewhat disordered, and policies and actions are most likely not appropriate for the entire cohort of homeless people that they are supposed to assist.

To have the capacity to include the actual words of the homeless/houseless participants would provide a veracity to the reveal of the data and assist in its interpretation. The words of the narration should provide a clearer picture of this type of lived experience than other means of research methodology.

1.4.1. Enlarging on the personal attributes of the researcher

Despite seven major inquiries in New South Wales into mental illness and homelessness, and numerous policy efforts over the past three decades (for example, a Select Committee of the New South Wales Upper House in-depth 2002 report titled 'Inquiry into mental health services in New South Wales', and the Commonwealth of Australia Green Paper document 'Which Way Home?' created in 2008, with the subsequent 2008 Commonwealth of Australia White Paper titled 'The Road Home: a national approach to reducing homelessness'), the numbers of homeless people in NSW have not reduced, more, increased (by 37 per cent in the 2016 Census). In observing homeless people in a professional sense over several years, in various places and scenarios around the proposed research site, I was disturbed by what I was seeing and believed that more could be accomplished to understand homeless lives, and alleviate the problems they faced (Byrne 2005; Scutella & Wooden 2014). Hence the response to what I instinctively believed (tacit knowledge), and what I was observing, led to the formulation of my initial research question, and more formalised the research path that could lead to 'propositional or explicit knowledge'. This knowledge would give veracity to the possibility of a recommendation (or recommendations) to improve life for homeless/houseless people. Moser (1986, p. 91) explains this as "…knowledge *that* some proposition is true."

The intense interest I have regarding homelessness, and the lives of those who either sleep rough or who have insecure tenure, has arisen from a number of different sources. From childhood I have been aware of the existence of people who live at low socio-economic levels and who are vulnerable to external forces. As a student nurse and then a Registered Nurse I have cared for men and women who were termed 'homeless', who existed in temporary and makeshift conditions, often living 'rough', but who required hospital admission to deal with a specific health issue. More often than not these people were discharged back into homelessness. Two examples of my direct contact with homeless people whilst admitted in a large metropolitan hospital are indelibly etched upon my psyche. The first was with a middle-aged man admitted into a large surgical men's ward. He was to have a complex surgical procedure and so was admitted for a number of days. During the

course of his stay it became obvious that he had no visitors and nobody to take care of his laundry and other needs. I arranged for a shirt to be washed and ironed so that he had something clean to wear upon discharge. The second related to a young man in the mental health ward. He was admitted for treatment of depression and as such was undergoing electroconvulsive therapy. He disclosed that he was homeless, and this was taken into account in terms of his interaction with staff members, and also his ultimate discharge plan.

In the early 1980s I completed a certificate course at the then NSW College of Nursing that required me to examine a locality, in terms of demography and other factors. I chose the current research site (that is, the LGA) because I have lived and worked within its boundaries, and I appreciated that there was a wide range of living standards and associated demographics. Somehow I knew, when observing the large numbers of homeless people residing in the area, that I was witnessing a social problem that would not improve over the years, despite many discussions, inquiries, offers of help and, it appeared, feigned policies. In relation to the certificate course, and at a discussion with a member of the police force, when I raised the issue of homelessness, I was informed that there were no homeless people in the LGA. This comment was in direct opposition to my, at that time, experience of hearing rustling in a clothing bin in Hornsby, and realising that there was a person inside the bin who was 'bunking down' for the night in the protection the bin provided.

My focus was reignited when I became the Executive Director of The Australian Podiatry Association – NSW. A podiatrist was completing a project for her university course that set up a podiatry clinic at the Matthew Talbot Hostel for Homeless Men in the inner city of Sydney. Once this project was complete, the Association decided to make the clinic a permanent feature of services available to homeless men, who referred to the podiatrist on duty as the 'foot doctor'. The clinic runs to this day, and provides an invaluable service to men who enter the hostel.

When elected as a New South Wales State Member of Parliament, for the electoral Seat that encompasses the research site, I became even more aware of the number and plight of homeless people residing in the local environs of the electorate. In a speech to the Legislative Assembly of the NSW Parliament (13 March 2009) I stated:

> People have been known to be living in caves in the Brooklyn area, in camps in bushland areas, behind the Hornsby swimming pool, in stairwells and generally around open spaces in the community. I recognise that homelessness in the Hornsby electorate has not been entirely obvious. In my electorate homelessness is largely invisible but it exists nevertheless.
>
> (Judy Hopwood MP, Hansard)

Whilst covering only part of this local government boundary, the main areas where homeless people sought refuge were included in the electoral Seat. For the first time I hopefully had the ability to effect changes so that their lives could be improved. I had numerous occasions of interaction with homeless people in the context of my parliamentary role. One such meeting occurred as a result of chance conversation with a man who was most concerned about a cessation of train services from Brooklyn to the CBD – he was due to receive his Australian Citizenship and was worried he would not be able to travel to the Sydney Town Hall. Another set of circumstances related to a homeless couple in a cave in Hornsby, who were expecting a baby. When the baby was born I was visited by the father to plead for the couple to be able to keep the baby – at the eleventh hour the father wanted to obtain employment, and then a traditional home, so that he and the mother could parent the child. These two examples illustrate that the problems and desires of homeless people are not dissimilar to that of the general population.

During the nine years I served in the NSW Parliament I set up an entity (in 2006) called the Hornsby Homelessness Task Force (HHTF). This subsequently became known as the Hornsby and Kuringgai Homelessness Task Force (HKHTF). This was set up in response to a series of crises in and around the Hornsby Country Women's Association (CWA) and Hornsby Park regarding homeless individuals. An urgent meeting was held that saw many people from diverse backgrounds and interests gather to decide what could be achieved in relation to homelessness in the area. The Task Force still meets to the present day and raised awareness, as well as worked to reduce suffering of homeless people. There were a number of collaborations between members of the HKHTF and Local and State Government, agencies such as housing, health and community services, non-government organisations, church groups and volunteers.

In late 2008, as the New South Wales State Member of Parliament for Hornsby, I requested the NSW Parliamentary Library to compile and publish a research document about homelessness. There are regular contributions on a vast range of subjects from the Parliamentary Research Service. "Homelessness in NSW", compiled by Kathryn Simon, was produced early in 2009 and encapsulated a review of homelessness as an issue in New South Wales, from definitions to demographics of homelessness, to various policy directions including the Green and White Papers produced by the Federal Government under Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister of Australia. The Briefing Paper looked at policies and programs developed overseas, and also the impact of homelessness on society. Within the document Simon (2009, pp. 19-20) describes paths that are traversed that commonly lead to homelessness and argues (2009, p. 19) that "the family breakdown career into homelessness arises from family and domestic violence." She also purports that homelessness can result from housing crisis and youth factors. The Commonwealth of Australia White Paper (2008, p. viii) set two overarching goals: to "halve overall homelessness by 2020" and "offer accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it by 2020." The Federal Government anticipated, or rather, expected, that the States of Australia would engage in the aims of the policy, to address homelessness in each of their jurisdictions.

As can be seen everywhere in our cities, people who are homeless are usually hungry and living in below-standard accommodation, if any at all (Chamberlain, Johnson & Robinson 2014, pp. 1-8). They often live in bizarre arrangements and have sometimes succumbed to the harsh lifestyle (McNaughton 2008; Robinson 2011; Parsell 2018). In the Hornsby LGA, serious events in the past concerning homeless people have occurred. In one event, skeletal remains found in bushland in the north of the Hornsby Shire were most likely to be that of a homeless resident. In another, a homeless man died as a result of his gas bottle exploding in the bush, leading Rural Fire Service personnel to initially believe a wildfire had started, until they discovered his charred remains (his badly burned dog had to be put down). These incidents are not always noted in any media outlet. However, one death of a homeless man was reported in the Hornsby Advocate in 1924. This man committed suicide in a camp in the bushland behind Kangaroo Point in Brooklyn, and was discovered by two police officers.

There is a desperate need for studies of the type proposed to be undertaken so that more can be learned about homelessness, especially chronic homelessness. People who are homeless often live in appalling circumstances, with little recognition in the wider community, and they have stigma attached to them, for example, that they are 'dirty-looking' and 'smelly'. The fact that there is little substantive written evidence about the existence of homeless people in the Hornsby LGA is another reason to support need for this research. Further, in order for changes to policy, and, indeed, creation of policy to assist the homeless, a body of work about the area's homeless population would substantially assist with informing and enabling such policy creation. I mention assistance to policy writing from the perspective of having been in a law-making role as a Member of Parliament. I have witnessed some policy being constructed without a deep understanding of the issue at hand. Policy development aside, the main focus of the research will be to add to the sociological body of knowledge about people who live in this way.

The 'homelessness roundabout' is disturbing to observe, and committed people have tried for many years to improve the circumstances of homeless individuals despite numerous obstacles. These barriers include governments that appear not to listen carefully enough to cogent arguments about what should happen, and often the homeless themselves. The process is regularly felt like a continuum of 'three steps forward then ten back' if, for example, a welfare officer arranges a difficult-to-acquire appointment with a housing or health professional that the homeless person fails to attend. Having a long-time exposure to the issues surrounding homelessness, and recognising that there were insufficient housing and services available to homeless people in my area, I became determined to effect change. The collection of significant data and the recording of information would tell the story of homelessness in my specific community, as well as provide evidence for placement before Parliamentarians and government officials, so that policy-making in general could be better informed. As I have said, improved policy development is not the overriding aim, but the outcome if research is conducted in a validated manner.

Being a very pragmatic person I wanted to logically and thoroughly examine the

lives presented to me, taking into account the background of the people, possible causes or influences as to why homelessness had occurred in their lives, and what happened as a result of their actions, and how all of these factors would affect their futures. I was very prepared to observe and communicate with my participants at the 'coalface' so that I would have the best opportunity to see, hear and feel the very heartbeat of these different lives. I took a practical approach to my planning, utilising the tools I believed would have the best acceptance by the participants, so that the most accurate lived experience would be on show and could be recorded. The heuristic path I entered into could have faltered along the research continuum, but this would reflect the qualitative iterative manner which is essential to this type of study. Heurism, being a 'passionate and discerning' quest to find out about, and understand, the intricacies of a life (Douglass & Moustakas 1985), was an important aspect of my study. Once on the research pathway, I was determined to uncover what it was that constituted the lived experience of the homeless/houseless woman, and with thorough planning and adequate methods, was confident my research design would result in rich data. Another vital aspect I would adhere to in the contact I had with participants was to treat them with the utmost dignity and respect.

I was also very determined to create a research thesis that was readable by those who might utilise the findings for future good. At the outset of my study, I knew that if I produced a document that was hard to read and absorb, then all the work over years of observing and interviewing the cave-dwelling people in Brooklyn would come to very little. It was also my belief that accessibility of my thesis to those who were responsible for creating policies to assist homeless/houseless individuals would be essential.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."
Maya Angelou

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is a critical part of the research experience, and as such will reflect the various aspects of the subject, the process, the collected data, the pertinent stories and the analysis and recommendations.

Fig 2: Inside the cave - a library of books in milk crates within the lounge room

The above photo (Fig 2) is a story in a picture and by examining this scene much can be deducted and learned. Just like this visual evidence, with a thorough review of literature in the lead up to commencing research, as well as accessing further literature throughout the data collection and reading other relevant information, these processes will guide and enhance the research journey. The literature search assists with the development of a solid research

question. It helps with the structure of the study to be undertaken, as well as the analysis of discovered data. A thorough literature review can find gaps in knowledge; it can also reflect questions – sometimes not answered – that other researchers have noted. Due to the nature of this study I will be aiming to create word pictures, so that the reader can gain a full appreciation of the subject matter. The fact I am researching the lived experience of homeless people in their natural environment will make it challenging to present an accurate depiction of them in this environment. The use of photographs throughout my thesis will assist with the communication of the process and concepts. In fact, photography could become a valuable part of the project, and so information concerning photographs would also need to be considered. Livingston (2010, p. 5) states "photographs raise social and political awareness by using arrestingly real and timely photographic images as a catalyst for education, cultural understanding and social action." In essence, photographs assist us to make sense of our lives and society around us.

I cast a very wide net in relation to reviewing available journal articles and books (including biographies) as well as other modes of information – newspaper and magazine articles, government departmental documents, non-government publications, reports, policies, media releases, theses and non-print sources. I had a selection of collected literature on the subject of homelessness myself, and a substantial file of media clips that I had collected over some years. I accessed databases and the internet to gather information and this included ProQuest, Scopus, Google and Google Scholar. There has been a great deal said and written about the subject of homelessness, and therefore I needed to set my parameters so I would gather a meaningful list of documents and other resources. I was initially interested in the elements of the conventional definitions of homelessness, houselessness, identity/self, stigma, marginalisation, social exclusion, trauma, acquired brain injury, agency, structure and narrative. My research may challenge some of the usually accepted ideas about the area. I did not limit my searches to peer reviewed content. In the pursuit of a relevant literature search, my goal was to discover what had been revealed about homelessness in the context of my research question and what may be a need for further literature in the future.

The chapter will reflect an unpacking of the field and the issues. Berger (2014, p. 39) states that the literature review "…summarizes the major findings of scholars and researchers who have conducted research…" on a specific subject, in this case, looking at homeless/houseless people in the Brooklyn area. It will give reliability and context to my study (Berger 2014). I will include seminal references, as particular theories of lived experience and identity formation are central to the research, and their explanations hail from the early theorists. These seminal works remain valid and relevant to my study. I will be looking at literature relating to homelessness as an entity, and definitions of homelessness and houselessness. I need to focus on the term 'homeless' in a global sense because the cave-dwelling people are generally classified as homeless, despite the fact that they have a shelter that could be construed as possessing attributes associated with having a 'home'. Therefore, it will be imperative to examine the meaning of what a home is believed to be. Whilst my study seeks to look at a woman who is houseless, the concept of homelessness in her case must be addressed. The woman was without a 'home' before she moved into a cave. Over time, she lived in the cave as well as having periods where she was away from the Brooklyn cave community. The habitation in the cave under the Brooklyn headland was considered by B and her husband to be having a 'home' but not a traditional house (Parsell 2012). Therefore, the supposition of being 'houseless' must be approached. Other areas to be addressed in this chapter are choice, trauma, perceptions, media and government policies. The latter two often influence the manner in which the homeless are viewed, and the way in which attempts are made to assist them. Government documents as well as media contributions are important as these are seen as vital additions to what is said about homelessness.

I need to mention tacit knowledge at this point because it is with this that I entered the research scenario. Charmaz (2014) argues that no researcher is admitted into the site to be observed completely devoid of some sort of pre-knowledge or feeling about the subject to be studied. Additionally, she believes that the participants will also be in a similar position. My apperception of the entity of homelessness is the total of an assimilation of my previous knowledge

and experience of the subject. Watson (2006) describes tacit knowledge as existing in a condition of being taken for granted. Watson (2006, p. 209) uses "…a spatial metaphor: 'background' versus 'foreground'", whereby the tacit is the background. It can be argued that if tacit knowledge is integral to the acquisition of knowledge, that we will therefore know what to search for, and we will have a reasonable idea about what it is that we want to discover (Polanyi 1996). Everyone possesses tacit knowledge about most aspects of their lives. This is also the same with research. It is the tacit knowledge I possessed about homelessness that assisted me enter the research environment, pose my research question(s) and plan the methods I would utilise to work towards explicit knowledge.

2.2. Narrative as a tool

It is my firm belief that there are some stories that need to be told, and that the best way to tell these stories is by narrating them in prose so that the 'voice' of the subject can be heard. Coyle (2007, p. 99) states that "…language in the form of discourses is seen as constituting the building blocks of 'social reality'…". In researching the cave dwellers in the Brooklyn area, I gathered many observations, including the actual vocabulary that the participants used in their conversations with me (Holstein & Gubrium 2012; Creswell 2013). The words of homeless people, in this case, are essential to tell their story with accuracy, and so their words must appear in the content of this thesis. In order to discover what will most give help to homeless people, Schneider et al. (2019, p. 317) tell the stories of a selection of homeless individuals and state:

> Our guiding principle was that the act of telling one's story, and the story itself, would be a form of social justice, prompting others to consider not only the oppression of homelessness, but also the embedded presence of resilience in even the bleakest of human circumstances.

To be able to tell one's own story, and to have it listened to or read, is a wonderful signal to the story teller that what they have to say is of worth.

As has been stated, my research follows a narrative inquiry style within an emergent design, thus making it iterative and flexible in nature (Plano Clark & Badiee 2010). The style has been defined (Narrative Inquiry 2019) as "…a form of qualitative research…that focuses on the organization of human knowledge more than merely the collection and processing of data." Clandinin and Connelly (2004) describe narrative inquiry as a method to use to understand and inquire into life experiences, over a period of time, and it consists of a succession of interactive interludes between the participants and the person conducting the study.

Narrative inquiry is an excellent means by which to understand lived experience in whatever context it might be presented, that is, social, cultural or structural, through the eyes of others (Riley & Hawe 2005; Clandinin & Connelly 2004; Clandinin & Murphy 2009; Clandinin & Huber 2010; Thomas 2012; Towers et al. 2017). Denzin (1989, p.6) believes that "grounding our interpretations in lived experience connects the internal with the social and is in accord with the goal of formulating an understanding of subjectivity from within…". Barusch (2012) suggests three criteria that would assist effective narrative data collection:

1. …that in-person data collection should use appropriate initiating prompts while giving the story-teller sufficient time and freedom to present coherent narrative,
2. … that data analysis should address not only the content, but also the form of the narrative,
3. that interpretation of data should acknowledge the context of the story-telling, as well as its narrative intent.

Richardson (1995, p. 210) believes that "narrative functions at the autobiographical level to mark off one's own individual existence from all others by its finitude." Participants tell stories, these are collected and upon analysis a wealth of information can be had regarding the identity and lives of the storytellers. Clandinin and Huber (2010, p.436) argue:

> …narrative inquirers are able to study the complexity of the relational composition of people's lived experiences both inside and outside of an inquiry and, as well, imagine the future possibilities of these lives.

Such an inquiry follows a comprehensive recursive and reflexive process, and this moves from the field (with starting points in telling or living of stories) to written field notes (data) to interim and final research analysis and presentation (Clandinin & Huber 2010, p. 438). They (2010, p. 440) go on the say that this type of research highlights ethical challenges, which "are of prime importance throughout the inquiry". Further, they acknowledge that such inquiries incur "change" such that "…phenomena under study are understood in new ways and, in this way, new theoretical understandings emerge".

The use of narrative inquiry enables a person-focussed research plan, flexibility, reflection and the ability to develop a close and trusting relationship with the participants. Horsdal (2012, p. 17) emphasises that:

> Life story narratives are more than chronological sequences of happenings. They are more than linear enumerations of events, they are stories narrated in a quest for meaning tied out by the configuration of the happenings and actions and by the chosen perspective of enunciation.

Hayden, Browne and van der Riet (2018, p. 125) state "narrative inquiry explores the narrative from a temporal, social and spatial view." They also believe that narrative "…is a gentle relational methodology that has the capability to uncover what is important to the person in their situation."

Linde (2001, p. 160) believes that "narrative provides a bridge between the tacit and the explicit, allowing tacit social knowledge to be demonstrated and learned…". Similarly, Riley and Hawe (2005, p. 226) purport that "narrative inquiry examines the way a story is told by considering the positioning of the actor/storyteller, the endpoints, the supporting cast, the sequencing and the tension created by the revelation of some events, in preference to others." Riley and Hawe (2005) also believe that this type of inquiry could produce unique and deeper insights into the circumstances of lived experience that would be more effective than other types of research methods.

Bruce et al. (2016) provide a positive analysis of the use of narrative inquiry stating its use shows "meaningful knowledge development" and that it is

imperative to use an emergent design for narrative inquiry “to continue flourishing in generation new knowledge.” It is my belief that the use of my voice in the narrative will be a significant part of the effectiveness of the storytelling. Hanrahan, Cooper and Burroughs-Lange (1999, pp. 401-416) describes this as ‘personal writing’ and promotes the use of reflective journals and note taking (and the inclusion of these in the thesis) as increasing the quality and relevance of the research.

In terms of narrative inquiry method, the central core and ultimate success of the research rests on the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Saleh, Menon & Clandinin 2014). Even before the participants are approached, it is vital to know as much as possible about them. Throughout the entire research process, continual awareness and analysis of the relationships developing with the participants are as important as the data being collected. Trust and respect are also essential.

Narrative inquiry is a dynamic tool, one that not only seeks to explore the present and, to some extent, the future, but also enables an examination of the past. Effective inquiry tries and can succeed to make sense of past lived experiences (eds Ellis & Flaherty 1992).

2.3. Lived experience

‘Lived experience’ is a product of social interaction. It focuses on how humans live in, and react to, their society at the phenomenological level (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Over the course of a life, factors such as material circumstances, opportunities and community attitudes will influence consciousness and identity formation (McNaughton 2008). These factors will be present in the life of every individual, however the varied aspects of the life being experienced will differ from person to person. People in society go about their lives performing everyday tasks and interacting with each other as part of their ordinary existence. In other words, these seemingly mundane activities form part of the experience of living.

In the context of this study, lived experience provides insights beyond appearances, physical conditions and personal circumstances into how the homeless view themselves, and how they see the outside world (van Manen 1990). Thus, the main focus of this research is the social interaction of the homeless people themselves and how they relate to each other and society in general and how they see themselves (Goffman 1959). It looks closely at how humans live and react to their community at the phenomenological level (Berger & Luckmann 1966), and the way in which they conduct their lives and the meaning of their interactions. Horsdal (2012, p. 21) supports the use of narrative when portraying lived experience when she says "lived experience can be configured by narratives from various perspectives…". The discourse that results from the presence of homelessness in our communities enables analysis of the accepted manner in which a general community exists as compared to how the homeless look and how they live their lives.

This study of lived experience, being ethnographic and narrative in nature, seeks to shed light on the lives of homeless people in an isolated community. Their day-to-day happiness, interactions and challenges will be observed. Wolcott (1995, p 88) purports that "discerning and describing the problems as defined and dealt with by any human group – some shared in common with all humanity, others unique to smaller subjects – are the stuff of ethnography." Thus, using an ethnographic approach fits well with looking at a lived experience. Fetterman (2010, p. 2) talks about ethnography by stating that "…the ethnographer is interested in understanding and describing a social and cultural scene from the emic, or insider's, perspective."

2.4. Foundational understandings of the 'lived experience' and its relationship to homelessness.

The middle of the twentieth century saw the emergence of a new paradigm, or lens, through which to view and make sense of the dynamics of how individuals existed and interacted within their communities. Charles Cooley (1902) argued

that the way in which people react to others shaped their self-awareness and self-identification. From this it was accepted that with the reactions of individuals to each other, identity is created as if looking into a mirror – a 'looking glass self'. Thus (Cooley 1902, p. 18) stated the:

> …'I' of common speech has a meaning which includes some sort of reference to other persons and is involved in the very fact that the word and ideas it stands for are phenomena of language and the communicative life.

Erving Goffman (1959) presented human life in a theatrical or dramaturgical light by using the analogy of actors in a play, portraying themselves in much the same way as we go about our everyday life. Goffman (1959, p. 44) states that "…when an individual appears before others he will have many motives for trying to control the impression they receive of the situation." Khan (2020), in his article on Goffman, supports the theories portrayed in 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life' and says (p. 399):

> Human action is not the manifestation of individual interest or character alone; instead it is circumscribed by an existing set of scripts, played out on a stage replete with sets we either inherit or have made. But there's more: we require other actors; we deploy props and accessories to make our performances convincing…

Khan (2020, p. 399) also states "this capacity to evoke through vivid analogy could be part of what makes Goffman Undead." By this last statement Khan is affirming his belief that Goffman's thinking is as relevant today as it was when he wrote his book.

Consciousness within the lived experience is of paramount importance, and how this was viewed by a number of sociologists marked a turning point in the understanding of humans in society. Berger, Berger and Kellner (1973, p. 12) argue "the *consciousness of everyday life* is the web of meanings that allows the individual to navigate his way through the ordinary events and encounters of his life with others."

The literature can be applied to the unique existence of people apparently living

on the margins of society. They, too, will be interacting amongst themselves, as well as with the wider society, and in doing so will be involved in communications and interactions that will highlight their identities. Many observers of homelessness (McNaughton 2008; Parsell 2010a; Robinson 2011; Parsell 2012; Parsell 2014) have recorded their investigations and interpretations of the homeless and the dialectic nature of the social environment in which they exist. This study seeks to examine the current thinking about homelessness (and 'houselessness') both to answer specific questions, and to challenge the accuracy and validity of some contemporary views of the reality of the lived experience of a houseless person in particular. The latter revelations would add to existing knowledge of this aspect.

Another significant consideration of lived experience is agency. According to Goffman (1959), we are all actors within our environment with a unique presence that is shown to the world. McNaughton (2008, p. 46) defines agency as "…the sense of individuality, of being 'an individual'…" and, in relation to how agency might be explained in communities, states that:

> This is their internal sense of unique existence recognised by themselves and others. Agency does not refer to actual actions or outcomes, but to the internal processes, independent of but embedded in structures, that individuals subjectively experience. This will have an impact on how they act, tied to their sense of identity and the need to maintain a sense of ontological security they have.

Agency informs the choices and actions that individuals undertake. McNaughton (2006) notes that becoming homeless has usually followed a sliding experience out of usual society and an inability to maintain financial equilibrium. When asked, many homeless people recognised this and McNaughton (p. 144) concluded that:

> The mechanisms (the homeless) identified could be divided into two categories: first, the individual and their actions (agency) and second, the structure of society and inherent inequality (structure).

Agency has an impact on the results of decisions taken, and because of this, in the homeless environment, many decisions undertaken by the homeless

person, whether in the best interests of that person, will be chosen because of how that internal environment is constructed. There is a constant tension between the individual and people connected to this person as well as with the environment in which they exist.

2.5. The nature of identity formation

The research literature shows that lived experience or 'human condition' is a consequence of personal reality, or, consciousness. People who are interacting within a community or social systems eventually reciprocate representations of each other's actions which is known as 'social construction'. This social construction of reality is an integral part of identity formation. Berger and Luckmann (1966) note in their seminal work, that humans have an innate desire to build and live in a society with other human beings. This habitation will grow to be what the person places as the premier existence. Giddens (1991, p. 185) purports that "a self-identity has to be created and more or less continually reordered against a backdrop of shifting experiences of day-to-day life and the fragmenting tendencies of modern institutions." The limits of the world are set by the natural environment, but once this has happened the reverse occurs, and humans react with their environment. To restate this phenomenon, a two-way conversation is ongoing between humans and the natural surroundings where they reside. The work of Berger and Luckmann thus opened up a way in which human interaction and relationships in a society could be understood.

Horsdal (2012, p. 115) states that "a narrative personal identity is constructed through life stories." McAdams and McLean (2013, p. 233) concur by saying that people are 'natural story tellers' and that a "…narrative identity reconstructs the autobiographical past and imagines the future in such a way as to provide a person's life with some degree of unity, purpose, and meaning."

Humans cannot exist without relationships that shape who they think they are, and how they are viewed by others, that is, their identity. Berger (1967, p. 16) argues:

> It is possible to sum up the dialectic formation of identity by saying that the individual becomes that which he is addressed by others. One may add that the individual appropriates the world in conversation with others and, furthermore, that both identity and world remain real to himself as long as he can continue the conversation.

In society we exhibit a certain awareness, a consciousness, of our existence and how we present to others. Berger, Berger and Kellner (1973, p. 12) state:

> Society is viewed…as a dialectic between objective givenness and subjective meanings – that is, as being constituted by the reciprocal interaction of what is experienced as outside reality (specifically, the world of institutions that confronts the individual) and what is experienced as being within consciousness of the individual.

Berger et al. (1973, p.12) further summarise this by noting that "…all social reality has an essential component of consciousness." This consciousness could be in the form of what Goffman (1959, p. 32) terms the 'front' and he defines it as "…that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who are observing the performance." It would appear that homeless people could also be players within their own community, living life that appears to be in a similar manner to people living in any other community. Or are they? This concept will be a focus of my data collection.

Consciousness gives us a sense of place and a sense of purpose, and provides the medium for how we see ourselves – our identity. We all seek to establish and maintain some form of identity, and this includes the homeless. Goffman (1959, p. 245) describes the 'self' within a life world as a "…performed scene (that) leads an audience to impute a self to a performed character, but this imputation – this self – is a *product* of a scene that comes off, and is not a *cause* of it." As has been stated, Berger and Luckmann (1966, p.173) believe that "…identity is a key element of subjective reality…". Similar to subjective reality, identity maintenance sees participation in a two-way conversation with those who share the habitation. Berger and Luckmann go on to argue that the phenomenon of identity "…is formed by social processes" that are "…maintained, modified, or even reshaped by social relations and that social

processes involved in both the formation and maintenance of identity are determined by social structure."

Berger and Luckmann (1966) also believe that identities produced by the interplay of organism, individual consciousness and social structure react upon the given social structure, maintaining it, modifying it, and reshaping it. They further state (1966, p. 183) that:

> In the dialectic between nature and the socially constructed world the human organism itself is transformed. In this same dialectic man produces reality and thereby produces himself.

It is important to acknowledge this seminal thinking about such concepts as identity because individuals excluded from general society due to being homeless, and likely to possess a mental illness or some sort of disability (for example, an acquired brain injury), also consider being part of a socially interactive group, and this actual community entity, to define self and the value that this holds (Fields 2011). Further, Fields argues that belonging is not simply an external relation between individuals and others, but one that involves a sense of identity. In observing homelessness, the manner by which identity and social interaction is established will provide insight into the lived experience of being homeless. Gee (2000, p. 1), however, purports that "the 'kind of person' one is recognised as 'being', at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable." This will be an important consideration when assessing the life B lives with W in the cave community, and in relation to her interactions with the wider society.

2.5.1. The role of socialisation in identity formation

Socialisation is the means by which each person is inducted into the dialectic of their life. This happens by way of being exposed to external experiences that will mould behaviour (Berger & Luckmann 1966). In terms of socialisation, it would appear that many homeless people have endured traumatic childhood

experiences, and as such, according to Robinson (2011, p. 107), early "…neglect, abandonment, and sexual and physical torture and trauma…" led to lack of skills and coping mechanisms in later life. This would appear to be especially magnified when added to the ongoing disadvantage of homelessness. Robinson (2011, p. 107) further states that underdeveloped basic life skills and behaviours, combined with "…habitual dispositions of fear, shame, defensiveness, anger, and mistrust…" directly affected presentation of the person into an already fragile future. The nature of the socialisation in early life, and then combined with further disadvantage, may cloud the ability of the homeless person to have insight into their circumstances thus adding to the difficulty in altering a lifestyle. In other words, the lived experience of homelessness usually reflects habitualised behaviour.

A component of this behaviour could see the homeless stereotyped, stigmatised and labelled, by way of societal reactions to external indicators already mentioned. In relation to stereotyping, Goffman (1963, p. 12) noted "when a stranger comes into our presence…first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, his 'social identity'…" In other words, the past experience of an individual will have a direct influence upon how others are viewed. Should this past experience include acquiring certain preconceived ideas, then these beliefs will be applied to the judgement of others. Interestingly, Goffman (1963, p. 17) also states:

> …it seems possible for an individual to fail to live up to what we effectively demand of him, and yet be relatively untouched by this failure; insulated by his alienation, protected by identity beliefs of his own, he feels that he is a full-fledged normal human being, and that we are the ones who are not quite human. He bears a stigma but does not seem to be impressed or repentant about doing so.

Looking from the outside, into the world of homeless people, there are certain characteristics, or stereotypes, that we might, from our previous experience, expect to see. From the perspective of the general community and its lived experience there appears to be certain expectations about what others should do or say, and there may be surprise and alarm if others do not conform to that expectation. In the lived experience of homeless people there might be insight

into the attitudes of those outside the sphere of being homeless; conversely, the homeless may not acknowledge the action of stereotyping. In other words, the identity constructed by the general community for the homeless may not be the reality of the identity they have constructed for themselves (Snow & Anderson 1987).

Pickering (2001) concurs with the view that the reality of the homeless may not be what it seems. He states (2001, p. 4) "stereotypes are usually considered inaccurate because of the way they portray a social group or category as homogenous." Pickering (p. 4) gives emphasis to this view by saying "stereotypes render uniform everyone associated with a particular feature." Homeless people may not see themselves as a homogenous group, but as individuals with separate and unique futures.

2.6. Homelessness as an entity

Homelessness is a concept that is often difficult to understand and articulate. Generally, when considering homelessness, it is not easy to see the individual. It would be true to say that the entity of being homeless places a 'dehumanising' pall over the existence of homelessness as a percentage of our population. In viewing the lives of homeless individuals, it would appear that the majority of the general population tends to associate this way of life with a 'chronic state' (Parsell 2014) characterised by such aspects of personal appearance as unkempt clothing, weather-worn faces, and possibly exuding malodour. Gerrard (2013, p. 11) states:

> The presence of homelessness can often appear 'out of joint' with the rest of the public space and the activities within it. Indeed, reflections on the place of 'the homeless' in public space shows that it is not 'public' at all: in contemporary capitalist societies public space is mostly given over to the consumption of commodities (from shopping to leisure activities), or acts as a space through which people move on their way towards some 'productive' activity.

The physical environment of the homeless could generally appear to be

associated with sleeping rough, poor food quality and amount, and few resources (O'Connell et al. 2010). By contrast, it could be viewed that these are second-order phenomena, and that a better understanding of homelessness as a social entity would be gained by focussing primarily on perceptions of reality held by those who fall into the category of homelessness. In other words, placing the focus on how they see themselves in relation to others, how they imagine they are regarded by others, and the impact of self-perception. Osuji (2009, p. 27) says of homelessness "(it) can be considered a dialectical concept because, within the process of homelessness, there can be extremes or varying positions in process or outcome."

I have already stated that the physical and environmental characteristics mostly associated with homelessness can be thought to be secondary to the consciousness possessed as integral to the lived experience of the homeless. Snow and Anderson (1987, p. 1340) note:

> Homeless street people are…confronted continuously with the problem of constructing personal identities that are not a mere reflection of the stereotypical and stigmatized manner in which they are regarded as a social category.

As indicated previously, in relation to the social context relating to homeless people, the concept is based on the presumption that it resides predominantly in the consciousness (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). By focussing on consciousness it is anticipated that what precedes the state of homelessness, as well as phenomena occurring whilst homeless – how homeless people perceive their situation, and thus, their reality and identity, or, in other words, 'how they see the world' – will impact on the state of being homeless.

Main (1994, p. 37) argues:

> The homeless man's problems, according to social-order theorists, are not that he is disabled and disaffiliated, but that his abilities and affiliations are frowned upon by the rest of society. He deviates from social norms and pays the consequences.

Main goes on to cite work by Spradley (1970) who stresses that the

stereotypical appearance and behaviour of homeless people are actually 'successful adaptions' to inadequate social opportunities. John de Hoog (1972) undertook, in the early seventies, over a number of months, to live as a homeless person in Sydney and describe this experience. In the time he spent trying to survive in often frightening scenarios, with unemployment as an exasperating problem, he confronted the attitudes of people who stereotyped homeless people.

2.6.1. Defining homelessness

It is important at this stage to unpack a broader understanding of homelessness from the "evocative voices that have wandered into this open landscape" (Duatre 2012, p. 104). Hence, the following literature review discusses a number of aspects of the definition of being homeless. It will be seen that there are a number of ways to view being considered, and defined, as homeless.

In relation to the meaning of homelessness, McNaughton (2008, p. 4) states that "defining homelessness is a surprising contested and complex issue." She adds (2008, p. 7) "clearly in literal semantic terms homelessness refers to being without a home – but this then opens up the problem of defining what 'home' refers to." When contemplating doing this, we are confronted by a range of attempts, most of which deal with the absence of a dwelling. Australian Governments have referred to the cultural definition provided by Chamberlain and MacKenzie, cited in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Position Paper (2011, p.1), that describes homelessness in three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary. These entities categorise homelessness as either a rough sleeper, a couch surfer with inconsistent accommodation, or living without an acceptable environmental standard of living. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012, p. 1) more recently decided to replace the Chamberlain and MacKenzie definition with its own statistical definition, that describes individuals who do not have suitable alternative accommodation as 'homeless' if their current living arrangement:

- is in an accommodation that is inadequate; or

- has no tenure, or if the start of tenure is short and not extendable; or
- does not allow them to arrange and have access to space for human interaction.

In a weblog called Deakin Speaking, James Farrell (2012) acknowledged the change in definition but believed that there would remain problems with such a definition. He stated (2012) that "unlike the cultural definition, which judges the adequacy of housing against an amorphous 'standard', this new definition is informed by the notion of 'home' and the elements that are consistently identified with home." Farrell (2012) expressed concern that the definition did not address the manner in which some parts of the population perceive being homeless. With the Commonwealth Government anticipating a new statutory definition of homelessness he worried about the fact that there would be multiple definitions instead of one commonly accepted definition.

McNaughton (2008, pp. 4-8) defines the term homeless as follows:

> Four intersecting but distinct dimensions can be identified from the literature, encapsulated here as:
> 1. 'Absolute' minimal homelessness having no shelter at all, rough sleeping (or "…the homelessness most prevalent in popular imagination…" (p.4));
> 2. Homelessness pertaining to the nature or quality of the housing someone has (or "Homelessness relating to housing circumstances merges into an exploration of hidden homelessness." (p. 6));
> 3. Homelessness as it is subjectively experienced (or "Clearly in literal semantic terms homelessness refers to being without a home – but this then opens up the problem of defining what "home" refers to." (p. 7));
> 4. Homelessness as it relates to statutory definitions, or the welfare entitlement that exists surrounding housing in a given locale or time (or "Depending on the definition of homelessness used, the number of people experiencing it, or the nature of homelessness, it will also be perceived differently in public and political discourse." (p. 8)).

The four definitions posed by McNaughton are relevant to the nature of the study because they provide greater scope than merely considering aspects of a dwelling or absence of same. At the same time an additional question can be posed: Are there other definitions and conditions of homelessness that have not as yet been included in the standard list?

Further to the discussion about the homeless condition, and in relation to the

definition of homelessness, Osuji (2009, p. 27) states “a part of the difficulty in defining homelessness is that it takes on different forms or meanings to different people, in different cultures, and within different contexts.” Osuji (p. 2) also says of ‘homelessness’ “the disaffiliated see society as withdrawing from them, and they see themselves as strangers after they lose affiliative bonds within family, friends, and society.” In referring to disaffiliation, and as a part of defining homelessness, the social and emotional disconnection, also referred to by McNaughton (2008), fuels the dialectic between agency and structure.

The United Nations (2015, pp. 1-2) has defined homelessness as follows:

> (a) Primary homelessness (or rooflessness). This category includes persons living in streets or without shelter that would fall into the scope of living quarters;
> (b) Secondary homelessness. This category may include persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between types of accommodation (including dwellings, shelters or other living quarters); and persons usually resident in long-term “transitional” shelters or similar arrangements for the homeless.

These definitions do not appear to take into account people who have a stable place to live albeit that it is a cave, and also do not give consideration to homelessness that is not in the context of having a shelter of some sort.

Homelessness Australia (2013) issued a statement describing a number of definitions of homelessness, and included the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA – an umbrella of not-for-profit organisations in Europe) definition (2017), which is:

- **Rooflessness** – without a shelter of any kind, sleeping rough;
- **Houselessness** – with a place to sleep but temporarily in institutions or shelter;
- **Living in insecure housing** – threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence;
- **Living in inadequate housing** – in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding

It is worth mentioning here that despite use of the word ‘houselessness’, FEANTSA (2017) only refers to it in the context of the homeless person living in

an institution or shelter.

In a further attempt at a definition, and a very personal account, Karp (2011) writes in her biography about being a single homeless young woman and describes homelessness as having no home or place of shelter and safety. Her explanation of the definition alludes to the very likely possibility that the homeless are often thought of as a homogenous group and not individuals with unique circumstances. This goes to the overriding perception by most in our society that homeless people all possess similar attributes, and as such are more often than not considered to have very similar circumstances.

Parsell (2010a) spends a significant block of his thesis discussing the definition of homelessness arguing that there is little agreement amongst experts about the definition of homelessness. He has found that there is a wide variation in this definition and states (2010, p. 5) “when definitions of homelessness vary widely, it follows that theoretical contributions, research findings, and practice with homeless persons will also be disparate.”

In discussing aspects of defining homelessness, an attempt has been made to flesh out the dialectic nature of a definitive sub-group – homeless people – thus deepening and widening understanding of the lived experience of that group. It can be seen that there is a real difficulty and conflict in arriving at a universal definition of what it is to be homeless. The establishment of an identity relies on a two-way interaction of a person with other people and with the environment in which the lived experience is taking place. Consciousness, or awareness of identity, is a constantly evolving and changing entity. In attaining consciousness, individuals are thus able to negotiate their ordinary, everyday lives as well as make sense of these existences. Hence, an accurate and applicable definition of homelessness is essential so that it can be the launch pad to effective actions and interventions on behalf of those in this sub-group.

2.6.2. Perceptions and cultural norms

The homeless appear to be living different lives to most in society, and this research will be attempting to illustrate that they are dealing with and constructing realities not so dissimilar to what might be deemed to be normal. It is clear that homelessness continues to be a matter that may be difficult to address, and that has for a long time not been well served by policies that could alleviate the many issues confronting homeless people. Factors that have been shown to work, for example access to housing and improved services, are not always available or acceptable. It is also acknowledged that homelessness continues to increase ill-health, lead to diseases spread by close association with other homeless people, challenge the treatment of long-term sickness, and highlight many discrepancies in public health care provision (O'Connell et al. 2010). Smith (2018, p. 103) states that "homeless life is a hard, hard slog. You're always hungry, you're always tired, and society always thinks the worst of you…". Gregory P. Smith was homeless for many years living in the hinterland behind Byron Bay. He eventually left his bush home and subsequently earned a Doctorate and works at a large university. Smith (2018) wrote a book "Out of the Forest", and this autobiography gives an account of his experiences as a child and young adult, before circumstances led to his homelessness; this transition from a homeless state to one of high achievement is both sobering and revealing. Smith's story is also presented in an episode of Australian Story.

The reality is that the definition of chronic homelessness remains unclear and, further to his comments on the definition, Parsell (2014, p. 234) concurs, stating "…there is no agreed definition as to what chronic homelessness actually means." In fact, there are too few pieces of research regarding chronic homelessness in the Australian experience generally. It appears chronic homelessness, with its usual rough sleeping and homeless people with complex needs, is lumped in with a global definition of what it is to be homeless. Within the context of the current research, the definition of chronic homelessness could be reassessed, and this may result in increased clarification of the term. With no agreed definition, the individuals who are in a chronically homeless state will

continue to be lost, invisible and will not have services and assistance given to them appropriate to their needs. The general community usually finds it difficult to understand and articulate homelessness in its various entities and will, more than not, mesh all homeless people into one group with ensuing confusion. The homeless are therefore likely not to be treated as unique individuals and may also be thought of as less than human. Keylon (1993, p. 21) states (in her Master of Arts thesis) that:

> The lack of norms and expectations that prescribe homeless behavior…place the homeless in unclear social positions. How are they to view themselves and how are they to be viewed by others in relation to being without any stability?

It would appear that most people have pre-conceived ideas about who the homeless are and why they look the way they do and what this means in relation to their lives.

Homeless people will often experience stigma associated with their daily lived experience. Goffman (1963, p.17) defines the term stigma as an attribute that is very offensive, and that a person with a stigma is not quite human, and states that:

> The stigmatized individual tends to hold the same beliefs about identity that we do; this is a pivotal fact. His deepest feelings about what he is may be his sense of being a normal person', a human being like anyone else, a person, therefore, who deserves a fair chance and a fair break.

Snow and Anderson (1987, p. 1336) argue that "congregated at the bottom of nearly every social order is an aggregation of demeaned and stigmatized individuals…" They also illustrate (1987) that the consciousness of these people, and especially the perceived challenge of establishing and nurturing the essence of a meaningful self-importance, is usually not a concern for them. It would appear that the general community often stigmatises the homeless for being the stereotype of unshaven (men), unkempt people who wear second hand, dirty clothing, and who often smell. Keylon (1993, p. 21) adds that "if the homeless are made to be deviant or helpless, how are they to construct a positive identity?" It is unclear at this time whether the homeless acknowledge

this stigma, or if they do, whether they actually care about what others may think. Society might label the homeless but their acknowledgment of this has yet to be more fully determined.

Homeless people are mostly living in the margins of society, and this is usually due to their way of life, as well as their appearance and lack of resources. McNaughton (2008) argues that this marginalisation occurs due to homelessness appearing to cause isolation and the reduction of normal, or usual, activities of daily life. She further says that certain observable aspects of the habits of homeless people, such as dirty clothing or excessive drinking of alcohol, add to the marginalisation. The chronically homeless appear to live in a liminal state. Correia (2011) and Downey, Kinane and Parker (2018) describe the entity of liminality in terms of human geography and describe it as a space that exists in a state of 'in-between-ness'. The word 'liminal' is defined (in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2020) as "of, relating to, or situated at a sensory threshold: barely perceptible or capable of eliciting a response, or, of, relating to, or being an intermediate state, phase or condition: in-between, transitional". Homeless people could be considered to be in a liminal place because they appear to exist in between the general community and somewhere else. In other words, they live in a 'liminal' zone, in the outskirts and within peripheral locations. This zone could even be considered to be empty and unstable. Whilst it appears to be 'outside' the usual rules of society, the liminal space may not, however, be free from constraints and challenges. It may possess some form of social norms and rules that are unspoken. It appears to be an isolated space where its residents, the homeless in this case, live apart from the wider community.

The situation of being homeless and the path to exclusion and marginalisation sees the homeless isolated, not only by the rest of society but also by their own actions (McNaughton 2008; Pederson, Anderson & Curtis 2012). These activities could be excessive drinking, not washing and failure to change their clothes on a regular basis. McNaughton (2008, p. 148) goes further in considering isolation by stating "the alternative to interacting with others in the same situation as they were was to 'hide' away and isolate themselves."

Homeless people who were not in a community of like-people could be so isolated that they suffered loneliness and even a worsening of any mental illness that they might possess.

Symbolic interactionism (Flick 2009) is another interpretive entity to understand. With regard to my research subject, there would be many meaningful interactions between the participants and their communities and wider environment around them, that could be better understood taking this into account. The term is reflective of the manner in which individuals relate to others in society. Flick (2009, p. 81) purports that "…the empirical starting point is the subjective meaning that individuals attribute to their activities and their environments." Early theorists pondered symbolic interactionism, and one of them, Herbert Blumer (1962, p. 107), states:

> The term 'symbolic interaction' refers…to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions.

Three main premises arise from this viewpoint: individuals act towards another based upon the meanings the individual has for a particular entity; the reaction to the communication provides a view about the manner in which the participant interacts with their social world; and, the meanings of the communications can be interpreted, modified and changed according to how the individuals involved wish the 'message' to be received (Blumer 1969, cited in Flick, 2014, p. 82). Schwalbe, in his 2009 web article, states:

> Blumer's methodological stance offers a way of approaching the task of understanding the social world that respects its fundamental character as patterned joint action dependent on meanings, the use of signs and symbols, interpretation, and negotiation. Generations of qualitative sociologists, some identifying explicitly as symbolic interactionists, some not, have found Blumer's stance to be an inspiring guide to doing sociology.

This seminal theory will be of significant importance to the research process by making a contribution to understanding behaviour and decision-making.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) make a comparison of positivism and naturalism, positivism being that which is scientifically handled and naturalism being an entity that supports an approach that is focussed on capturing details in a natural environment. They believe (2007, p. 4) that:

> collecting data in 'natural settings', in other words in those that have not been specifically set up for research purposes (such as experiments or formal interviews)…gives a distinctive character to ethnographic work.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) promote the notion of symbolic interactionism as having more natural, unplanned elements whereby that which is observed has occurred without any prescription and can be interpreted as such.

2.6.3. What is a home?

In the general community the concept of a 'home' usually takes the form of a structure that varies in size but that has four walls and a number of rooms within a building. This structure is usually man-made and even though the size and layout might change from culture to culture and country to country, the components of the 'home' are recognisable within the usual accepted definition of what a home is. There is also another aspect of a home, the 'felt' dimension (Robinson 2011, p. 6), where she states that a 'home' is "…revealed…as a primal spatial and corporeal relationship that generates ontological security and orients the self psychologically, socially, spiritually, and temporally in the world." In 1992 Somerville, (cited in McNaughton 2008, p. 7), states that there are seven signifiers of home and these are "shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, abode, roots, and paradise". McNaughton (2008, p. 7) acknowledges that "people may have multiple senses of what home means to them." In 2000 Wardhaugh, (cited in Robinson 2011, p. 6), states that "home is at least partially a physical place, but is more a state of being." Also cited (2011, p. 6) are Nunan and Johns (1996) who argue that home is "…an emotional space and place of intimate feelings." Gieseking et al. (2014) appear to agree with Robinson and McNaughton, and support the notion that "home, both a place and an idea, is

complex and multifaceted".

In 2000 Patrick Troy edited a book about the nature of Australian housing as it had developed since European occupation of the continent. Mitcheli (cited in ed. Troy 2000, p. 78) states:

> The material home represents the concrete expression of the habits of frugality and saving "for a home of our own". …one of the best instincts in us is that which induces us to have one little piece of earth with a house and a garden which is ours: to which we can withdraw, in which we can be among our friends, into which no stranger may come against our will…

As can be seen, Mitchell embodies the structure of the house as well as the 'feeling' surrounding the possession of such an asset.

Osuji (2009, p. 2) concurs with the aforementioned definitions and opinions about a 'home' by arguing that a "…home enables people to achieve both psychological and physiological well being through meeting safety, security and love needs." Osuji (p. 18) adds:

> Having a home and feeling at home wherever one finds oneself is an important part of adjusting to one's external environment and staking rootedness and acceptance in the community. Home is seen as a symbol of protection against the elements as well as a status symbol, as in having or owning a home.

Dekkers (2011) explored the meaning of 'home' in the context of health care and states (p, 291) "the term home plays an important role in all kinds of narratives about human life." He discussed home in relation to being a human being and concluded that it was human to 'dwell' in a home. Osuji (2009, p. 20) shares this belief and states "according to Heidegger (1971), to be a human being means to dwell upon the earth as a home, and thus for a human being, building a dwelling becomes a way of making a space within the world."

2.6.4. A word on houselessness: space and place

The majority of work on homelessness refers to the absence of a home (in the

traditional sense) to substantively provide the definition of being homeless. Robinson (2011, p. 7) states:

> In the context of homelessness research, an interpretive conceptualization of home is significant as it helps to throw into relief not just the material impacts of the lack of appropriate housing but the potential existential and emotional dimensions of home-lessness.

So, what of an existence whereby there is a 'home' but not a house? People who live in caves have some, or most, of the structural items that fit a definition of a 'home'. May (2000), (cited in Robinson 2011, p. 7) referred to being homeless as to be "both without a place of shelter and 'home as a place'."

There are many examples around the world of people who live in a dwelling other than what western society would deem to be the usual type of house, that is, built with a number of rooms based on a four-wall model. In Mongolia, for example, many individuals and families live in a structure called a yurt or ger. This is a round tent-like dwelling that is as much a 'home' to its residents as a brick veneer house in Sydney. In the south of Spain there are homes fashioned out of rock at the base of mountains. Very recently, Jamie Lafferty (7 September, 2019), wrote a newspaper article about a town in Italy, Matera, where in the oldest parts there are dwellings called 'troglodyte caves' that have been created out of the sides of hills. These 'homes' are thought to have been occupied for around 8000 years. Today residents still occupy the hill caves and they have become a tourist attraction. This is another type of a 'non-traditional' home, yet these dwellings are considered to be homes despite the lack of four walls. There are yet other examples of 'cave' dwellers in Turkey, Greece and even Australia, where people in Coober Pedy, for example, have carved out underground homes out of rock. The main difference between the Brooklyn cave dwellers and the examples just described are that the Coober Pedy and overseas 'troglodytes' live in socially acceptable dwellings, whilst the Brooklyn houseless people are on government land and have no legal right to their place of residence.

In the entity that is homelessness, the majority of people thus defined have no

specific ‘place’ of permanence. Snow and Anderson (1993), (cited in Gieryn 2000, p. 482), believed that “to be without a place of one’s own – persona non locata – is to be almost non-existent…”.

2.7. Choice

With regard to homeless people, there is often reference to the word ‘choice’. An observer might ask the question: “Did the person ‘choose’ to become homeless?” Or there may be the statement: “Who would ‘choose’ to be homeless (given the challenges inherent in this particular lifestyle)?” This is a vexed matter because there are those (usually workers in the field) who do not believe that anyone would choose to be homeless, and that if a homeless person states that a positive choice was made to be without a dwelling, then this answer is considered erroneous. These ‘expert’ people usually have the aim to end homelessness completely. On the other hand, there are some who believe that whilst most homeless people would rather have accommodation found for them, a number of people who are deemed to be ‘homeless’ have actually opted to be thus. In the course of the research I expected this subject to surface. It is a provocative concept, but I believed it to be very much part of the decision-making that was undertaken by B and W, and as such the term needed to be addressed.

Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2014) argue that the Australian Bureau of Statistics actually has a category for the ‘choice’ of being homeless when a Census is conducted. There are criteria (that Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2014, p. 86) define as being financial, physical, psychological and personal means) relating to this category, and a homeless individual who fits the criteria is technically removed from the homeless count. They also report that statistical numbers referring to the ‘choice’ category are not able to be discovered. It is pertinent to note that, in the 2016 Census, there was a greater effort made to capture homeless numbers more accurately, and Census collectors were provided with additional training to equip them to ask more pertinent questions.

2.8. Trauma

Trauma and abuse are widely recognised as a common occurrence in the early lives of women (and men) who become homeless (Maguire et al. 2009; FEANTSA 2017; Phipps et al. 2018). Robinson (2011, p. 7) states that:

> Vulnerability to homelessness may be enduringly embedded through experiences of mental illness and the dis-embodying post-traumatic effects of tragic and life-threatening events, physical and sexual abuse, and violence.

In her Master of Science thesis, Tracey Tully (1997) particularly looks at women in homelessness. She purports (p. 15):

> …it is clear that violence is a prevalent and important problem in the lives of homeless women in terms of being both a predisposing factor for becoming homeless and a result of their increased vulnerability once in the homeless situation.

Tully (1997) looked at violence as well as the occurrence of abuse (psychological, social, physical and sexual) in the lives of homeless people. She argued (p. 1) that "many (women) have suffered a history of violence, repeated victimization, chaos, and uncertainty, which began in childhood." This included incest and rape that she believed were common in many of the lives of homeless women. Tully also mentioned the loss of dignity whilst suffering the abuse and violence and that this loss of dignity continued into adult life.

It has also been recognised that being homeless can, in itself, lead to mental anguish and psychological trauma (Goodman, Saxe & Harvey 1991). As has been already described, trauma and abuse are often seen in the early lives of people who become homeless. Goodman, Saxe and Harvey (p. 1219) concur and state "many homeless people – particularly women – become homeless after experiencing physical and sexual abuse and consequent psychological trauma." They also purport that factors associated with becoming homeless, for example leaving a family home and the conditions found in shelters, can add to the psychological burden of a person and initiate trauma after homelessness

has occurred.

The area has some complexity, and can include such issues as poor emotional attachment to a care-giver in childhood (that could lead to feeling unsafe, insecure and without protection). Muller (2014), a professor of psychology, states that "abuse and inconsistent care can shatter children's sense of self and reality", and dissociation (that is a reaction when an individual is subjected to great trauma). Insecure attachment, in simple terms, can result in lack of self-confidence, anxiety and behaviour problems. Muller also writes about dissociation by stating that "dissociation is a phenomenon most people have the capacity to experience" and that "it is a coping mechanism used to manage stressors as minor as overstimulation or as severe as sexual abuse." In the analysis of the study it may be of some assistance to briefly refer to psychological issues that could explain some of the data. However, this thesis largely sits in social spheres and I will not be delving into psychology in any depth.

2.9. Media

There is no doubt that the media in all its avenues has had a huge impact on the plight of homeless people by reporting regularly about aspects of the homeless lifestyle. I have already referred to the 2019 Lafferty article on 'troglodyte caves' in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Regularly there are articles and news items that refer to homeless people. Often these relate some sort of crisis situation or crime allegedly committed by the homeless. It appears that the more day-to-day aspects of the lives of the homeless are not very 'newsworthy'.

Giddens (1991, p. 27) states "in conditions of modernity, in sum, the media do not mirror realities but in some part form them…". I believe that it can be seen that the media, by virtue of placing a focus on a specific issue, can create an atmosphere for much debate and speculation about that issue. Media articles and comment can also assist in the formulation of observer attitudes.

There are many articles that have been written about homelessness over the years. Denis Moriarty (1 July, 2019) makes the following statement in the *Illawarra Mercury* "homelessness is a national problem that's rapidly compounding." Coates and Bye (24 January, 2019) wrote an article titled 'Street appeal big drawcard for homeless' whereby Council officers in the Sydney Central Business District were 'swooping' on homeless people sleeping alongside prestigious shopping precincts. D'abrera writes in the same newspaper (*Daily Telegraph*) in the same edition (24 January, 2019) under the heading 'Rough sleepers need tough love, not blame game', that to ease the burden of the over 100,000 homeless people, real solutions are required. The day before (23 January, 2019), in the *Daily Telegraph*, the front page shouted out the headline 'Down and out at the QVB: homeless hit shopping mecca' (authored by Bye and Coates this time) plus a two-page spread (pp. 4-5) titled: 'Scamming on comfy rd'. As can be seen by the previous few examples, media contributions raise issues, fuel debate and can offer ideas for solutions to these social problems.

On a completely different, but related, perspective, the *Sun-Herald* (17 May, 2015) ran an article titled 'Cave man gets heritage view' where the journalist (Tim Barlass) wrote about a man who stumbled upon a cave on his property in the Blue Mountains, and created an environmentally efficient space in the cave. This is a contrasting example of cave dwelling.

For a long time, I have kept numerous newspaper clippings that concern homelessness. The *Sun-Herald* journalist Harriet Alexander wrote an article (15 January, 2017,) titled 'Homeless occupying 'Sydney's most prestigious address'' where she described rough sleepers outside places like the State Library, Belmore Park, NSW Parliament House, Martin Place, Wentworth Park and Central Railway Station. In the same edition (*Sun-Herald* 15 January, 2017, p. 32) the Editor wrote an additional article titled 'Home should be where our society's heart is'. In it the Editor took the position that not enough was being done for the homeless situation and, in relation to the places homeless people sleep, stated that with regard to policy "…the sad juxtaposition of power

and powerlessness in our report shows how it fails."

Even further back in 2013, the *Sydney Morning Herald* ran an article by Kelsey Munro (27-28 July) titled 'The cold reality of homelessness bites deep on winter streets' that included information about a homeless man found deceased in a burned down garage where he had been trying to keep warm by using candles. And another from the *Daily Telegraph* in 2011 with an article ('Cold and so alone') by Neil Keene (16 June) that describes life in winter living on the streets.

A more recent article dealt with a different perspective; Hannah Ross (30 October, 2019) posted an article on the *ABC News* site under the headline 'Byron Bay's illegal campers draw the ire of native title holders, authorities'. Discussing a number of circumstances of people living rough in protected bushland, one camp dweller states "I don't like living in walls, I don't like feeling boxed in." This man's decision to live in a rugged terrain, he said, stemmed from the trauma of the death of an infant child.

In an overseas editorial ('Why Kirsten Harris-Talley makes a point of using the word 'houselessness'') retrieved from a website in the *Seattle Weekly* on the subject of homelessness (25 October, 2017), a Seattle city councillor urges to use of the word *houseless* instead of *homeless* and she does this in the context of promoting increased money for the building of more housing.

With respect to the research site, Brooklyn, there have been articles concerning homelessness, with one of these referring to my participants (in fact a number of media articles appeared about the couple). In the interest of anonymity, I do not include any details of the title and month. A journalist in 2015 wrote in a local newspaper, a front page story, where she described certain activities of the homeless couple as attracting newer homeless people to the area, thus swelling the numbers in Brooklyn. In addressing this example, I acknowledge that the participants appeared to be very compliant with, and, indeed, they enjoyed the focus on their lives, when approached for media comment and inclusion in articles. An editorial article ('Homelessness policy 'not council's responsibility'') appeared in the *Hornsby Advocate* a few weeks later (28 May,

2015, p. 10) whereby the local Council was called upon to formulate a policy to assist the homeless, but declined to do so stating that the issue of homelessness was a State matter.

From the few (as compared to the many articles that have appeared) examples of media concerning homeless people and homelessness as an issue (or a problem), it can be seen that the media do, indeed, have a very powerful ability to create a storm over a situation, and to paint a picture of homelessness with their words and photographs.

2.10. Government policies

Over time there has been much written in a government policy sense about the 'institution' of homelessness. The three levels of government have all made varying statements and commitments about the existence of homeless people, what this means to the community and how to assist the homeless in their plight. However, the focus on homelessness as an issue fluctuated with successive governments, and in some cases was not addressed at all.

Amongst the myriad of documents, government media releases and policy statements, there are a number that stand out and that have direct relevance to homeless people residing on the banks of the Hawkesbury River. These are:

- **NSW Parliamentary Research Service**
  - *Homelessness in NSW: Electorate Statistics* (2018, December) – a research document that largely examined the issue of homelessness in each electorate.

- **The State of NSW**
  - *NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023* – the NSW government response to the stubborn numbers of homeless people in NSW from the 2016 Census.

- *Foundations for change – Homelessness in NSW: Discussion Paper (2016)* – seeking answers to enable the NSW Government to improve the manner in which it addresses the challenges of homelessness.
- *Going Home, Staying Home* (2012) – a list of reforms designed to improve homelessness services.
- NSW Government – *Future Directions for Social Housing* (c. 2016).
- NSW FACS – *Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places* (Guidelines for Implementation 2013) – this document was/is an extremely important addition because it assisted police and others to better manage issues associated with homeless people living rough and being in public places.

- **The Australian Federal Government**
- *The Road Home*: A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness (2008) – this very important landmark document was a policy suite to assist homeless people and such a comprehensive approach had not been seen before.

Suffice to say, with everything that has been written from a government and policy perspective, the numbers of homeless people in New South Wales and Australia over time has either remained static or increased. I will return to the aspect of policy-making in Chapter Seven.

2.11. Other interested parties

I feel it is important to mention a unique publication called 'The Big Issue' – a magazine that has been in production for many years. Vulnerable people, including the homeless, are able to gain some income by selling these magazines. The Big Issue is a phenomenon around the world. It is not uncommon to observe people selling the publications at railway stations and the like. The Big Issue (October 2012, p. 2) states it "…is Australia's leading social enterprise…(which is) an independent, not-for-profit organisation that develops solutions to help homeless, disadvantaged and marginalised people positively change their lives." The publication contains a variety of articles and

information, not all dealing with disadvantage and often from contributors writing to express a view.

There are a number of non-government and other organisations and groups that take a serious interest in homelessness. They are too numerous to name but many are working hard to assist the homeless, as well as to lobby governments to improve their policies, and this is particularly so around election time. Examples of some of these organisations are Mission Australia, Mercy Foundation, St Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, Homelessness NSW. Drilling down into the regional and local areas there are networks and smaller groups that also work for the alleviation of suffering of the homeless; the Hornsby and Kuring-gai Homelessness Task Force (to which I belong) is one of these entities.

2.12. Precis of literature reviewed

As can be seen, the review of literature undertaken for this research was wide in its scope, whilst utilising parameters to point the researcher in the direction of the appropriate areas to be examined. I have tried to arrange, in a wealth of written and spoken words about homelessness, a review that is logical and relevant to the aims and scope of the research. As a critical component to proceed with this study, the literature review will enable effective qualitative research, with narrative inquiry as a major underpinning to the collection of data and the analysis of the findings.

This study will seek to examine the interactions of human beings and their lived experience. The literature covered areas including the nature and role of identity formation, homelessness, houselessness, definitions, choice, and trauma. Perceptions of homelessness as well as thoughts on what constitutes a home were addressed. The relevance of government, non-government and media influences were also discussed.

The study will be guided by an emergent design, and will be iterative in nature

and with a strong theoretical basis. Supported by revelations in the literature, the data collected will be rich and thorough in its content. As a solid substrate in the process of this research, the literature review, thus conducted, will assist in methodology decisions and the ultimate outcomes of the project.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY: THE MEANS TO AN END

"Diverse sources converge on stories of experience, indicated by the term narrative, and the performance of identity, as indicated by the term personal. Embedded in the lives of the ordinary, the marginalized, and the muted, personal narrative responds to the disintegration of master narratives as people make sense of experience, claim identities, and "get a life" by telling and writing their stories."

Langellier, cited in Riessman (2008, p. 17)

3.1. Introduction

Following the initial selection of homelessness as my research subject, the manner with which I would be undertaking the study needed to be designed. This methodology would seek to answer the question I had posed:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of one woman living in a houseless community?

The nature of the topic meshed very well with a qualitative approach. In relation to a more natural entrée into research, von Franz states (1974, p. 27) "…in universities and educated circles it is argued that there is too much technique and not enough relation to nature in the life of modern man." Even though this was said some time ago, I know the discussion continues. I support this view in that the study I undertook could not have happened in any scientific environment; the data I was able to collect was all the more rich because of my ability to immerse myself in the research area and wait to discover what might emerge unexpectedly from my participants. So, my emic knowledge at the inquiry entry led me to choose an ethnographic approach utilising a narrative inquiry design that would ensure close contact with my participants at the places they lived and spent time. This would be imperative for sufficient and

quality data collection. I engaged in a negotiation with my participants so that together we could discuss and co-design the approach to the study. Given the lives to be explored, this connection was vital if I was to succeed in gathering data at interview times and other interactions with the participants. There was a vital necessity to have a workable level of cooperation and coordination between the researcher and the participants. Zamenopoulos and Alexiou (2020. P. 12) state, in relation to co-design:

> The formulation of design anticipation as a collective property is essentially a recognition of the complex and emergent nature of design anticipation, which not only resides in the capacity of individuals…, but also on the formation of this shared boundary space that frames the work of a distributed set of individuals and the negotiation and coordination of transitions that take place in order to progress a design activity.

The creation of an emergent design assisted to order, with flexibility, the process and give coherence to the research plan. The following is a thorough account of the methodology, and the methods that allowed me to collect data and make sense of it. There will be mention of the mode of entry into the research and how decisions regarding the process were undertaken. Research questions were considered and created, with the anticipation of answers following data collection (Graziano & Raulin 2013). Limitations will be discussed. The researcher, whilst immersed in the area of study, maintained a reflective distance so that veracity could prevail with regard to the data collection. Hart (2011, p. 5) states that "…both ethnography and nonfiction narrative share immersion reporting as a core technique."

The mix of methods that I chose to undertake this study - partial ethnography informed by narrative inquiry design with hermeneutic phenomenology – I anticipated would combine to produce fruitful information. Flick (2014, p. 43) states, in relation to qualitative research, that in reference to types of methods (for example, ethnography and narrative analysis) that "there are overlaps between these approaches." My study would not only incorporate events and activities, it would also include dialogue and interactions. From a hermeneutic perspective, as Flick states (2014, p. 42), this "includes interview data as well as images, documents, art, and all sorts of practices." I believed that the type of

data I was going to collect required the mix of methods selected.

The manner in which I related to the participants was crucial to the quality of the data, hence I believed that to be able to immerse myself in the environment was the best way in which to achieve this quality. The overriding concern was, however, for the participants in that they were living in a harsh environment and were considered to be in the category of the most at-risk in society.

3.2. An ethical approach

In order for the research process to properly commence, the issue of ethics was at the forefront, and a great deal of emphasis on ethical standards should and would be placed on the entire research undertaking (Punch 2013). The ethical considerations would not only include the approval, but also any recommendations from the approval (the participants' consent form and information letter – Appendix One) as well as extra actions such as consent form signing by other interviewees (Appendix Two) and consent letters for any piece of personal information (Appendix Three) that would likely be used in the final assessment (for example, photographs). The matter of ethics had been addressed in the assessment of the research project by the Avondale University College ethics committee (number 2013:32). This was granted, with my research data collection able to begin from December 2013. It was imperative that I abided by the set ethical standards, especially as my participants were amongst a very vulnerable group. To this end a thorough explanation was forthcoming, as was the signing of consent forms and provision of an information sheet. The consent provided by the participants (December 2013) was informed and voluntary (Graziano & Raulin 2013). I realised that I was about to embark upon a very special relationship with people who were not living in what would be considered an 'ordinary' community, and who had, most likely, had experiences that were traumatic. Of course, I would not know anything about the past lives of my participants until I was able to speak to them and receive information about them. I was very cognisant that I was in a privileged position and I highly valued the ability to be with these extraordinary

people. I set a high standard for my interaction with them and continually assessed the contact experiences I had so that I could pre-empt any problems (that could then be immediately addressed).

The aim of my research was to create a meaningful engagement with my participants so that I would be able to gather data that was unique and insightful about their lived experiences. Apart from adding to the body of knowledge about homelessness, the collection and analysis of this data would then be available for inclusion in policy development into the future as well as provide additional insight into the lives and beliefs of the homeless/houseless population. The relationship between the researcher and the participants was hoped to be one of trust, mutual respect and cooperation.

Despite a pre-data knowledge of the homeless/houseless participants in Brooklyn, no direct personal contact or communication had been made with them up until the time I approached them to secure an agreement that they would be interested in being part of my research. In the pre-data period, before I was formally communicating with them, I was able to gather some information about the couple, as well as attend their wedding. This pre-data knowledge was an essential component of my entry into the research spotlight. The wedding, in particular, highlighted a number of intriguing and puzzling aspects of the lives of people who were homeless, not the least of which was that the nuptials were between two people who lived in a cave. Attending the wedding cemented my decision to approach B and W to participate in the study. The pre-data provided a very useful substrate to build on when the ethics-approved data collection period began, and will be discussed as part of this chapter. The use of the pre-data information was addressed in the context of the ethics approval.

The ethics approval procedure thoroughly examined my research concept, title and question. It examined the manner in which I would undertake my research and how I would manage challenges. A question was posed regarding whether my research would be adding to knowledge. I explained the subject (chronically homeless people living in caves) was unique and that similar research had not

been undertaken. This study would provide an insight into the lived experience of the participants that had not been provided previously. The selection of a narrative approach was believed to be appropriate given the type of participants; B and her husband were willing to participate via my request for interviews and very happy to tell the stories of their lives. They had no issues with having the interviews recorded. As has been previously stated, they enjoyed media attention. I would be attempting to capture meaningful stories about the lives of the participants, and these would be collected over a relatively long period of time – I calculated, perhaps, one year. I anticipated that each time I met with B and W, that aspects of their lives previously discussed would be enlarged upon (Clandinin & Connelly 2004).

Given the nature of the participants, utilising a narrative design in telling the stories in the thesis document would "…engage readers emotionally as well as intellectually" (Ricketson 2014, p. 235). In order to transfer a strong message about the lived experience, and what might assist such marginalised people, I needed narrative as a tool to really emphasise the reality of their lives. Over the time I collected data, I arranged a series of dates (organised with mobile phones) by which to meet the participants, and in each of the arranged meetings many stories of their lives emerged, sometimes the stories adding to previous descriptions of the lives they were leading and had led.

With regard to the proposed participants, I would be personally inviting the people I had selected following consultation with peers (at the Brooklyn Community Health Centre) to ensure that there was nothing in their lives that would be a disadvantage to them should they agree to be participants in the research. As I have indicated, I already had some pre-knowledge of their existence. To repeat, up to the time of the approach to be a part of my research, there had been no relationship between me and the participants in any context. My attendance at the wedding had been at the invitation of the Nurse Manager of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre and not from the couple.

The participants were amongst the most vulnerable people in society and so

consideration needed to be given to their wellbeing and safety. The principal place of data collection would be the Brooklyn environs where the participants conducted their lives. The main site for the interviews and conversations would be parks in the Brooklyn village where they spent the majority of their days. My research design entailed one-to-one conversations, interviews and general observation and I did not anticipate the emergence of any problems. The participants understood that they could raise any concerns with me immediately, that they did not have a compulsion to undertake any task(s) with which they did not feel comfortable and that they could terminate the relationship and research at any time.

In terms of anonymity, the participants, once the data collection period had been completed, would be provided with another name in the writing of the thesis document. After much deliberation about the use of pseudonyms, and the difficulty in attributing such names, it was decided that only the first letter of the participants' names would be used. The data collected would be totally confidential and stored securely and used appropriately. After the final document is completed, all data would be destroyed.

3.3. Qualitative research

The initial proposed research sought to understand the lived experience of an apparently marginalised and stigmatised couple through the paradigmatic lens of ethnographic qualitative research. Qualitative studies enable exploration of lives as lived in society (Creswell 2009). It leads to understanding and the answering of certain questions posed about the lives. Creswell (2013, p. 48) states:

> We conduct qualitative research when we want to *empower individuals* to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study.

And:

> We conduct qualitative research when we want to write in a *literary, flexible style* that conveys stories, or theater, or poems, without the restrictions of formal academic structures of writing.

When progressing through the research design, the focus came to rest upon one woman, B, and her lived experience. As van Manen (1990, p. 55) says "lived experience descriptions are data, or material upon which to work." This approach is described by Mason (2002, p. 1) as the ability to:

> …explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences and imaginings of our research participants, the ways that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work, and the significance of the meanings that they generate.

Additionally, Denzin and Lincoln (2011, pp. 3-4) describe qualitative research as often involving:

> …a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to self.

And:

> Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, and cultural texts and productions, along with observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives.

This summarises the *bricolage* of possibilities for collecting data in this investigation (Warne & McAndrew 2009). Further to this, Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p. 14) state:

> Qualitative research is endlessly creative and interpretive. The researcher does not just leave the field with mountains of empirical materials and easily write up his or her findings. Qualitative interpretations are constructed.

Ethnographic qualitative research focuses on a group of people who share an environment and culture (Creswell 2013) with the aim of viewing the world of the chosen group from an insider's perspective (Charmaz 2014). The participants in this research entered into a respectful relationship with the researcher, which further allowed observation in their environment. Thus, the

research became a two-way relationship of co-learning.

The inside/outside concept is helpful to consider in terms of the special relationship between the researcher and the participants. Whilst the researcher is technically on the outside, the relationship with the participants (the insiders) needs to be developed so that, as much as possible, the researcher can grasp what is happening in the lives of those being observed. This is supported by von Franz (1974, p. 8) who states that:

> If one lived…alone it would be practically impossible to see one's shadow because there would be no one to say how you looked from the outside. There needs to be an onlooker.

Thomson and Gunter (2011, p. 27) state that:

> The very act of creating the terminology of inside and outside researcher identities is a sociological practice of fixing and naming, an act of sense-making that promotes an illusion of stability."

However, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) cited in Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 55) state:

> The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others – to indwell – and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 87) warn that "…those defined as outsiders or insiders are likely to have immediate access to different sorts of information."

My membership of the Hornsby Kuring-gai Homelessness Task Force gave me the advantage of viewing the world of homeless people in the Hornsby LGA on a number of occasions. The role of being the local Member for Hornsby in the New South Wales Parliament also provided some insight into the demographics of the electorate that I served. These two roles enabled me to have contact with the staff of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre, as well as other entities such as police, local government council officers and people who worked at non-government organisations. I therefore came to know of the presence of cave dwellers in Brooklyn

and, over time, the concerns held by those who worked with homeless people about their lack of housing and the challenges of living rough. It is in this scenario that I decided to approach B and her husband to be the participants of my research. I sensed that they might be willing to allow me to observe their lives.

It should be noted that while an ethnographic relationship was established, the couple selected appeared to be part of a wider homeless community in Brooklyn, and because of a seemingly itinerant lifestyle existing in most homeless communities, the longitudinal nature of this research could have been impeded by participants who may need to move on, for example, in cooler weather, or leave for some other reason. Notwithstanding this, the two people initially chosen seemed to be longstanding members of this community and, most likely, cohabiting. Once full agreement to participate was finalised, the data would be collected in a natural environment (Creswell 2013), that is, in the vicinity of where the homeless people live and socialise. As stated by Creswell (2013, p. 45):

> …qualitative researchers gather up-close information by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their natural context. In the natural setting, the researchers have face-to-face interaction over time.

As has been previously stated, this inquiry aimed to investigate the lived experience of a homeless couple and then a single woman. As such, it took van Manen's (1990, p. 39) perspective which is:

> When a phenomenologist asks for the essence of a phenomenon - a lived experience - then the phenomenological inquiry is not unlike an artistic endeavor, a creative attempt to somehow capture a certain phenomenon of life in a linguistic description that is both holistic and analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive.

This research goes beyond the usual picture of homelessness; the study investigated the central question within the confines of a small community of homeless people that had thus far not been addressed in this way. In fact, the presence of preconceived concepts about being homeless (McNaughton 2008; Robinson 2011), as well as the use of definitions that mainly address the presence (or not) of a *home* structure (Chamberlain & MacKenzie 2012), are central themes

that would be investigated.

The researcher planned to live in the Brooklyn environment for an extensive period of time (at least three separate month-long sessions) to observe daily activities and movements of the homeless inhabitants; this was to be achieved by staying in the Brooklyn Motel and accessing observation points in the village of Brooklyn as well as meeting with the participants in the locality. Informal interviews (Giddens 2009, Charmaz 2014) would be conducted with the homeless couple, as well as other significant people who reside in the general community.

3.4. Emergent design

The emergent design concept lends itself to the type of qualitative research I would be undertaking. Bruce et al. (2016) state that "narrative research methodology is evolving, and (they) contend that the notion of emergent design is vital if narrative inquiry is to continue to flourish in generating new knowledge." They supported the recording the stories of the participants, and believed that these were 'important sources of empirical knowledge'. In itself, the existence of a design to guide my research is a phenomenon. By this I mean that the elements of the emergent design 'plan' are not exhaustive and are flexible, and iterative, thus accommodating the circumstances of the participants and the overarching selection of the type of qualitative research I was conducting. Bruce et al. (2016) also contend that "…researchers using (narrative inquiry) can, and must, pursue unanticipated methodological changes when in the midst of conducting the inquiry."

In the narrative inquiry I was attempting, the emergent design guideline would enable me to collect data and then, if necessary, revisit certain aspects (Plano Clark & Badiee 2010) so that more could be collected or another piece of important data could be uncovered. Horsdal (2012, p. 3) believes that:

> …life story narratives are influenced by memory traces of our physical

> journey from place to place in a social and cultural environment. The path we travel in time and space is unique to each individual.

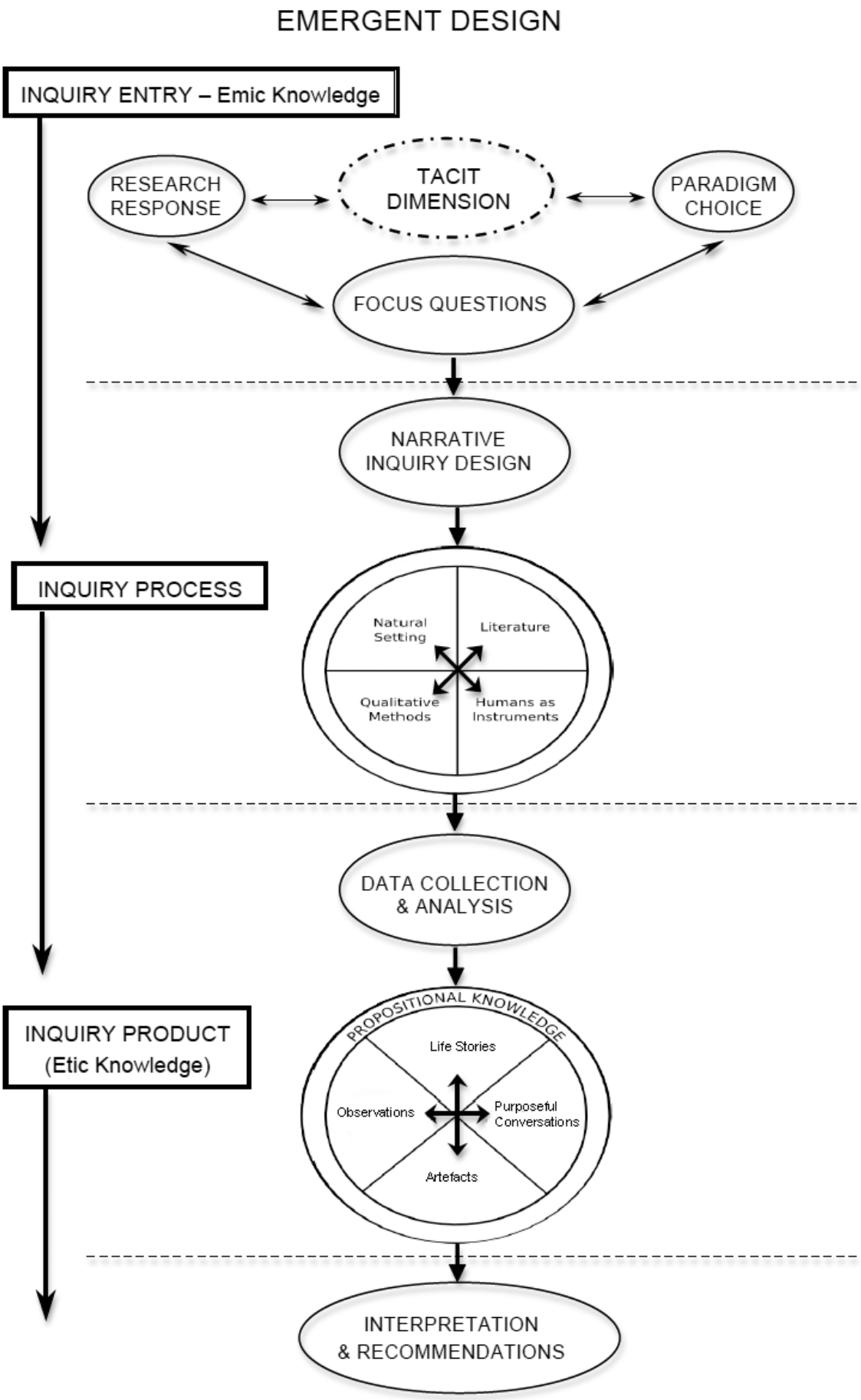
Utilising an emergent design within a qualitative ethnographic narrative inquiry would enable the researcher to capture the specific continuum of life events and how the participants react to each other, society and their environment. The ability to assemble the information about the participants would be very iterative as the data collection progressed. The emergent design I had planned would enable me to unearth individual circumstances and sequence in a 'lived experience' sense within the parameters of a narrative inquiry design. The ability to refer to the emergent design diagram added to the structure of the research; I could refer back to the diagram to review my progress, and it ensured a sense of order in the process. Creswell (2013, p. 47) states:

> The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent…the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and…all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data.

Creswell (2013) also argues that data collected and observed must be interpreted, and that in an emergent design process, this data collection will be repetitive in nature as well as have the element of flexibility. Christie, Montrosse and Klein agree, and maintain (2005, p. 271) that "emergent design is an evaluation approach that begins with a loose participatory framework, which is utilized to define the roles and interactions of those involved." Likewise, Pailthorpe (2017) states that "emergent design refers to the ability to adapt to new ideas, concepts, or findings that arise while conducting qualitative research." She poses the belief that emergent design allows the discovery of new and unanticipated information, thus adding to the rich nature of the collected data. Pailthorpe (2017) also states:

> The researcher takes cues from the data, process, or conclusions, and the whole study is a reflection of varying levels of emergent characteristics within that research process.

Diagram 1:- The Emergent Design scope is detailed in the following schematic diagram:


EMERGENT DESIGN
INQUIRY ENTRY – Emic Knowledge
RESEARCH RESPONSE
TACIT DIMENSION
PARADIGM CHOICE
FOCUS QUESTIONS
NARRATIVE INQUIRY DESIGN
INQUIRY PROCESS
Natural Setting
Literature
Qualitative Methods
Humans as Instruments
DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS
INQUIRY PRODUCT (Etic Knowledge)
PROPOSITIONAL KNOWLEDGE
Life Stories
Observations
Purposeful Conversations
Artefacts
INTERPRETATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The emergent design conceptual diagram to be used in the current study, believed to be a very essential addition to the research process, was developed by the researcher, and contains the important components of the study that would guide its undertaking. The design was painstakingly constructed, commencing with the entry into the research, and moving through the stages of the research experience. It details the salient elements of the research process for the progression of the researcher and the participation by B and her cohort.

3.5. Tacit knowledge

As has been previously stated, the tacit dimension is a central part to the development of explicit knowledge (Polanyi 1966) and assists us to realise what we need to look for in data collection, and also provides us with clues about what further information we may need to pursue. Guba and Lincoln (1989, p. 176) state "tacit knowledge is all that we know minus all we can say…" It was my initial observation into the construct of homelessness that assisted me to realise that there were unexplored areas relating to the homeless person, both in the participants selected, as well as the way in which individuals participate within the homeless river community. Again, in this form of research there is a two-way co-learning relationship between the tacit knowledge possessed by the researcher and that possessed by the participants. Together, and in the process of the research, the meeting of this knowledge between researcher and homeless persons would provide awareness about the issues being discussed and it would give value to what each took from the research experience. Tacit knowledge (intuitive and felt) is the basis upon which the research questions emerged as propositions to be investigated. It informed the data collection and added substance to the analysis of the findings. Tacit knowledge is important – it would complement and enhance explicit knowledge (Polanyi 1966) as the propositions in relation to the homeless are explored. Because there would be a multiplicity of examples in lived experience (Creswell 2009), utilisation of tacit knowledge, along with what is *seen, heard and understood,* would greatly assist the data collection and enhance the quality and validity of the study.

3.6. Narrative inquiry design

I would utilise the voice of the homeless with their stories, in the context of an ethnographic narrative inquiry, and this voice would be negotiated, that is, the researcher would discuss with the participants the manner in which the conversations took place, where they would be held and how long the time for these interviews would be. Likewise, it would be important to take leads from the participants in relation to which subjects could be easily addressed, and which would be prohibited for discussion, that is, very painful parts of the homeless individuals' lives. Van Maanen (1995, p. 15) states:

> If representational language that typifies the research community is full of concepts like deviance, disintegration, and decline – all drawn, say, from sociology – an ethnographic study…will produce events that fit these very features rather than events that fit features associated with different concepts such as displacement or destabilization…".

The researcher would use appropriate language when speaking with the participants and would be alerted to instigate conversations with terms or concepts that would not encroach upon wider, possibly as yet unknown, aspects of homeless lives.

To emphasis its importance, and to prepare for stories of the lived experience of B in Chapters Four and Five, I will enlarge upon the narrative paradigm and how the use of narrative is the most appropriate means by which to illustrate B's life. The observations I would make would be planned to be recorded in specific timeframes (I would arrange to stay in Brooklyn so that I could either directly interact with B or I could sit at a distance and watch local Brooklyn village activities) and at opportune times when I happened to meet B and/or W in the village setting. This meant that the data collection would be ongoing and persistent, and an iterative process that I was constantly balancing in order to arrive at an interpretation of the lived experience as I witnessed it. The writing of the stories and narrations therefore would provide many opportunities to *re-story* the collected data to allow the narrative to flow logically. As Gutland (2012, p. 6) states, narrative is "…true stories well told." I would endeavour to illustrate insight into the lived experience, painstakingly constructing the stories

in separate sections and utilising direct quotes from my journals and the participant interviews to enhance the logic of the narrative.

It is imperative to capture the *human experience* (Ricketson 2014) as consistently and insightfully as possible, because only by doing so will the most accurate impact be achieved. Ricketson (2014, p. 236) states "there is a relationship between the work of narrative non-fiction and the actual people and events it seeks to represent that cannot be gainsaid." Chase, cited in Denzin and Lincoln (eds 2013, p. 56) describes narrative inquiry as a form of research that "…revolves around an interest in life experiences as narrated by those who live them." This would encompass observing activities of daily living and then recording what was seen so that the lived experience could be interpreted. This type of inquiry has a value-laden overlay that is present as it is undertaken.

Further, it is important to present the rationale behind using a series of ongoing and connected narrative stories (Clandinin & Connelly 2004) depicting a living auto-ethnography, extracted directly from the key participant, the critical participants in their social networks, and observations made within the site. These would be retold, or 'restoried' (Holstein & Gubrium 2012; Creswell 2013), as dialogical narrative (Holstein & Gubrium 2012), to provide a crucial insight into their lives. A narrative approach (Clandinin & Connelly 2004; Riessman 2008; Holstein & Gubrium 2012; Clandinin 2013; Creswell 2013; Ricketson 2014; Thomas 2016) would be utilised in order to capture, with veracity, the lived phenomena that were revealed as part of the data gathering. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007), cited in Clandinin (2013, p. 12) frame the utilisation of narrative inquiry by stating:

> …the focus of narrative inquiry is not only on individuals' experience but also on the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals' experiences are constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted. Narrative inquirers study the individual's experience in the world, an experience that is storied both in the living and telling and that can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside another, and writing, and interpreting texts.

I would aim to utilise co-constructed narrations within storytelling (Thomas 2016) to present the reader with the lived experience as I evidenced it. Thomas

(2016, p. 8) states that “story is used in narrative theory to refer to the chronological sequence of events that underlies the narrative.” He further states (p. 55) “…cognitive narratology argues that narratives offer us the opportunity to read the minds of others, and to try to understand what it is like to experience the world differently.” Hence the use of the ‘narrative story’, to place before the reader a chronology that would allow understanding of the sequence of events, as well as in depth narration to highlight the salient sociological aspects captured.

The ethnographic approach utilising the stories of homeless people, in particular the main participant, living in the chosen local government area, was planned to produce a rich and insightful picture of the realities of life without a ‘house’. Riessman (2008 p. 9) sums this up by saying “narrative invites us as listeners, readers, and viewers to enter the perspective of the narrator.” Narrative provides the connection between tacit and explicit knowledge (Polanyi 1996) and allows social knowledge to be demonstrated and learned (Linde 2001; Creswell 2013). The conversations I would have with B and W would provide insight into their lived experience, and a narrative approach would capture the data (Clandinin & Connelly 2004). For accuracy, balance and rigour it would be absolutely essential that the homeless couple were able to talk freely about their lives and have their words recorded as accurate evidence of the homeless experience (Min 1999). Whilst collecting the data there could be ebbs and flows relating to the complexity of the life observed, as well as negotiated aspects (Clandinin & Connelly 2004) within the relationships that developed. Therefore, some parts of the following story in Chapter Four could be multilayered and deeply intricate in the revelation of life experiences, whereas other parts may be more superficial and straight forward.

Creswell (2013, p. 220) says he views “the narrative study as back-and-forth writing”, and, as I have described, Clandinin and Connelly (2004) talk about it as an iterative process. Thus, I planned, that as I progressed through the data gathering, my ongoing analysis would very much be reliant on constant revision of what I had already collected to assist me to make sense of what it was I was attempting to record. I anticipated experiencing the ‘messy methodology’

(Mellor 2001) that is commonly present in such research, which in many ways reflected the 'messiness' of human life.

The time spent in the field, and interacting with B and her peers, would be a period of immersion with hopefully remarkable experiential and empathetic consideration of what was being observed. Therefore, there would be an inevitable overarching subjective underpinning to this paradigm. It was expected that it would be possible to gain a deep understanding of the lived experience throughout the process. Whilst narrative from the data collection would usually be presented in third-person writing, I anticipated I would be utilising a first- (Bochner 2012) and third-person style, due to the close relationship that was likely to grow between the participant and the researcher. In fact, it would be impossible to accurately impart the stories and narrations without the use of both styles.

My aim in the writing process would to reflect a flexible evolution of the data collection experience (Clandinin & Connelly 2004), and to show the hermeneutic nature of this research with its explanations of human behaviour and interpretations of the phenomena firmly entrenched in what it was I viewing and what was told to me. Wilson and Hutchinson (1991, p. 265) explain that "phenomenology, the study of human phenomena, focuses on the 'lived experience' whereas hermeneutics refers to the interpretation of the experience." In studying the phenomena of lived experience (Creswell, 2013) my goal was, with the use of the stories and narrations, to illustrate and highlight understanding of the activities of B, as described by Riessman (2008). This was planned to be undertaken in a semi-chronological manner (Creswell, 2013) because the iterative nature of the opportunities to collect rich data would direct how I would initially record the data, and how I would logically project findings from the stories and narrations.

3.7. Dialogical narrative analysis

It was planned that the analysis of data collected within the ethnographic

approach, utilising a narrative design, would be of a dialogical narrative nature. The aim was to allow the essential elements of B's lived experience to surface within the stories so that they could be seen and understood. Clandinin, Pushor and Orr (2007, p. 21) state that "…narrative inquiry requires particular kinds of wakefulness". In order to gather as much insight as possible into the gathered data I decided that a dialogical narrative analysis would be preferable given the nature of the participants, the possibility that the data collection would have challenges and the need to show justification for the interpretation of events and conversations. Mangan (2017, p. 44) refers to Reissman (2008) when she states:

> Dialogical and narrative traditions share an interest in how social reality is constructed through everyday interaction with others, and how social conventions and taken-for-granted meanings are constantly produced and reproduced in interactions between people.

Mangan (2017, p. 45), in reference to dialogical analysis, says "every word and utterance presumes the existence of an 'other', an audience, to hear and respond to it." Frank (2012, p. 33) purports that "dialogical narrative analysis…understands stories as artful representations of lives; stories reshape the past and imaginatively project the future." The analysis would attempt to interpret the verbal comments and observed actions, reflecting the stories, of the participants for the meanings contained within them. Butina (2015, p. 192) believes:

> Data collection and analysis is not a step by step procedure as collection and rudimentary analysis is a simultaneous activity. Initial analysis begins during the first interview or observation while the researcher identifies emerging insights or hunches.

Dialogical narrative analysis was selected so that the identities of the participants (B in particular) could be recognised and the lived experiences could be determined. Riessman (2008, p. 139) concludes that the "…meaning in the dialogical approach does not reside in a speaker's narrative, but in the dialogue between speaker and listener(s), investigator and transcript, and text and reader".

The process would entail reading and re-reading the interviews I had transcribed, as

well as the journal and diary entries made. I anticipated there would be a number of stories contained within each meeting with the participants, as well as the observation of the participants and the site. These stories would be likely to reflect the early lives of the couple, how they became homeless and interactions with others. The stories may not be clear-cut (Riessman, 2008) so it would be imperative to revisit the story subject matter to seek clarification, for example, the wedding of B and W and life in their cave to provide two scenarios. I include a table listing the types of data collection in Appendix 4. This will clarify the number of interviews and the dates undertaken, as well as the other types of data collection used.

Fig 3: Looking out from the Brooklyn marina towards the bushland terrain

3.8. Realistic ethnography

To enlarge upon the ethnographic application to my data collection, it can be said it was of a realistic nature. I was to be directly involved with a group of apparently disadvantaged people who were deemed to be homeless and who resided in caves. I would be positioning myself to be intrinsically linked to the participants I had chosen to be part of the research. In order to adequately and accurately observe these people and to collect data reflective of their lives, as I have mentioned, I would live within the adjacent village for stretches of time that

numbered into months over the course of the study. As can be seen in Fig 3, the reality that I would immerse myself into was one of busy river settlement plus dense bushland.

Within the setting, I would be observing the activities of the participants as well as collecting participant stories as data, along with my diary notes and journal entries. I would also utilise artefacts that I hoped the participants would accept. This is indicative of an ethnographic approach. The definition of ethnographic realism (Ethnographic Realism 2019) is as follows:

> Within the field of anthropology and other social sciences, ethnography is a form of research that relies on a range of sources of data, but usually tends to rely on participant observation.

And:

> …'ethnographic realism' has…been used to refer to a style of writing that narrates the author's experiences and observations as if the reader were witnessing or experiencing events first hand.

The aim of this research was to be as objective as possible which is the essence of true realistic ethnography (Creswell 2013). I would endeavour to capture the day-to-day activities of the lives of the participants and to produce "the participants' views through closely edited quotations…" (Creswell 2013, p. 93). Following the data collection, I would endeavour to present the findings and place an interpretation that would accurately represent the lived experience, seeking to have no personal bias or moral or other judgement of the homeless people I was studying.

In aiming to answer the key questions of this study, a number of significant areas needed to be examined. These included how do the homeless view themselves? And how do they see the outside world? Rock (2007, p. 29) states "knowledge, it is held, is not now in the library but in the field, and it is for that very reason that ethnographers conduct field work."

Spradley (1979) writes about the ethnographic research process (that can be applied to communication with homeless people) and stresses care with the type of phraseology used in interviews (it may be that the participants use

language that they believe the researcher wants to hear), with the relationship between the researcher and the participant (so that a true representation of the lived experience can be had), with the interview questions (so that the participant tells the 'real story'), and accurate participant observation (because what you think you see may not be what is actually happening). Spradley (1979, p. 36) stresses that the "informants have a right to know the ethnographer's aims." This sentiment is as correct today as it was when Spradley wrote it.

3.9. Bricolage: framing propositional knowledge

As has already been stated, the investigation would not be constrained to one mode of inquiry, but would be a "bricolage" (Denzin & Lincoln 2011) of several approaches, with the view to include direct observation of the participants, compilation of life stories, semi-structured interviews, diary entry and photography. This selection of data collection would aid the development of an appreciation of the homeless population and specific aspects of their lived experience, and give an embedded analysis (Creswell 2013) of the participants. The researcher would be 'immersed' (Creswell 2013) in the research from the perspective of living within the site, and therefore able to observe the day-to-day activities of the homeless people concerned. Creswell (2013. p. 90) states that this immersion enabled the researcher to "…study the meaning of behaviour, the language, and the interaction among members of the culture-sharing group." In collecting the data, I would build on the explicit knowledge I possessed about the research participants and their lives, this leading to propositional knowledge (Berger & Luckmann 1966) and theory development. It was hoped that bricolage, or the use of multiple sources of information collection, would provide a rich source of data (Saldana 2013). The gathering of the research data with methodological tools is explained as follows:

3.9.1. Artefacts

I will utilise a number of contemplative artefacts in the collection of the data. This includes the keeping of a series of reflective journals, where all observations, thoughts, feelings and beliefs about the homeless people in the Brooklyn environs would be recorded, as well as happenings in which they are involved. Another reflective notebook will be used to record 'in-the-field' observations (Flick 2014) where there was not direct contact with homeless people in Brooklyn, rather sitting at a site where observation of the way in which homeless people move around their environment was possible.

As will be discussed further, another key component of data collection would be the use of semi-structured interviews (Flick 2014). Questions would be posed to each of the participants and their replies captured on a voice recorder. The interviews would then be transcribed and compiled with other collected data.

Another anticipated artefact will be a diary provided to the participants so that they might record their thoughts and activities of daily living into this diary. It was also hoped that B would draw an aspect of their lives onto a piece of paper (Charmaz 2014) hence paper and pencils would be provided. It was anticipated that results of such drawings would provide insights into the lived experience of the homeless that could not be discovered in any other way. The couple would also be given disposable cameras, where the participants would be encouraged to take as many photos of themselves and their environs as they cared to (Schratz & Walker 1995). The researcher would then have the photos developed in order to examine and, hopefully, analyse (Duffy 2008) the content. If thought useful, an interpretation of each photograph may provide important data that only a photograph of personal moments can capture.

3.9.2. Informal discussions

Informal personal discussions will be undertaken with the participants in order to compile their life stories. These would encompass details of their lives up to,

and including, the point of becoming homeless, as well as their current circumstances. This would be the initial part of the data collection and relational development in this instance. The discussions would take place at the beginning of the contact with participants, and thereafter as was appropriate. Interactions would be added to as the relationship grew, trust developed, and other aspects of their lives were discovered. Giddens (2009, p. 58) believes that "these methods are used to explore how individuals experience social life and periods of change, and how they interpret their relationships with others in the context of a changing world." Charmaz (2014, p. 71) states "both individuals' past and immediate identities may influence the character and content of interaction."

In addition to informal discussions with the participants, I would also seek to have conversations with significant others in the research site. These people will be known to the participants, and will also know the participants through the lens of their presence in Brooklyn and their roles therein. These interviews will be recorded and transcribed. In terms of who I would interview under this category, I anticipated an advocate of the participants, as well as a health professional who had cared for the participants, and a resident in the local Brooklyn community who knew the participants from a fellow-resident perspective. These interviews would discuss the issue of homelessness generally.

Apart from the gathering of information about the participants and their early lives, as well as their current circumstances, the undertaking of informal discussions was aimed to provide a sharing of life stories between the researcher and the participants. It was hoped that the sharing and informal nature of the discussions would place the participants at ease, and that a trusting relationship would develop, that would enable very detailed information about the lived experience to be imparted.

3.9.3. Purposeful conversations: semi-structured interviews

The aim was to interview the key respondents (Charmaz 2014), with meetings taking place with the consent of the participants, at times suitable to them, and as often as was needed to collect the data required. These semi-structured interviews would occur in concert with the informal meetings and discussions, so that valuable information gathering would be enabled regarding the individuals and homelessness in general. Therefore, I would be adding continuously to the knowledge of the life experiences of the participants. Guided open questions (Flick 2014), within semi-structured interviews, would be used, where each participant had similar questions to answer, and these would be asked in such a manner so that they had the opportunity to freely discuss their views, feelings and ideas. There would not be a prescriptive list of questions; instead, I would have themes to explore in each interview. I believe this approach would better aid flexibility of the discussions, so that there would be no exclusion of subject matter the interviewees wished to raise. I refer to this interview technique as semi-structured, whilst Flick (2014, p. 207) refers to the technique as semi-standardised, and says, with this approach, "…the interviewed subjects' viewpoints are more likely to be expressed in an openly designed interview situation…".

Creswell (2009) agrees and has stated that by using *broad and general* questioning, the participants are more likely to be able to accurately describe their circumstances and/or actions. In other words, I wanted to obtain enough information about the participants so that, as Charmaz (2014, p. 19) says, we can not only "learn about the world, but also…advance our progress in constructing theory." Thus, a rich and informative discourse would be enabled.

The interview process would be iterative (Charmaz 2014) and this would allow the gathering of valuable insights at different times of the day, as well as over a number of months. Flick (2014, p. 274) explains the use of such interviews by stating "the episodic interview yields context-related presentations in the form of a narrative, because these are closer to experiences and their generative context than other presentational forms." Flick is also of the view (2014, pp.

274-275) that the central part of this form of interview is that the interviewer can ask the participants to present stories about their lives in a series of specific circumstances, enabling the interviewee to add, over time, to the subject matter raised. These comments support the decision to utilise a narrative approach. The list of interview themes would reflect the focus of the overriding question of the current study, and other research questions needing to be answered, and would be formulated based upon knowledge obtained from initial observation of and discussions with the participants.

3.10. Observing and listening

My professional life has given me some degree of observational awareness in that I am also in possession of knowledge that I have gleaned from reading in the literature base. My experience up to this point was pre-theoretical, and thus would be better informed and theoretically realised by the prospective data collection and analysis. I would observe the homeless people themselves, as well as note their environment and interactions with others (Charmaz 2014) in order to gather rich data that could be relied upon through a triangulation process (Flick 2014). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 183) purported that:

> …data-source triangulation involves the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the field work, different points in the temporal cycles occurring in the setting, or the accounts of different participants (including the ethnographer) differentially located in the setting.

These observations would be written in a journal as well as the notes that were recorded as part of the 'in-the-field' days I spent in Brooklyn. As stated, I aimed to spend three separate sessions in situ in Brooklyn (for 4 weeks at a time) whereby I could record activities and movements of homeless people at fifteen minutely intervals on most days, and over differing lengths of time, as well as at different times of the day. The layout of the small village, Brooklyn, provided a perfect opportunity to observe the comings and goings of every resident and visitor plus the homeless individuals. The journal entries would become part of the assembled data and would be analysed as such. There could possibly also

be other informal and unplanned interactions with homeless people both in the research site and outside it.

The entire milieu would be examined and any significant aspects would be recorded. This examination would also include services and necessities provided to homeless people in the area that they would otherwise be unable to access, for example, electricity and showers.

3.11. Limitations: my personal journey

A thorough review of all aspects of the research process is essential, this including a discussion about the limitations of the study, whether real or anticipated. The characteristics of the research plan (incorporating an emergent design), and the actual undertaking of the methodology in seeking data collection, may produce factors that influence the type of findings, as well as the analysis of these findings. Narrative inquiry could be seen as a limitation because it is largely recording events that have passed into time (Riley & Hawe 2005). Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 60) state that:

> Our position as qualitative researchers is from the standpoint of being 'with' our participants. The 'with' is in 'relation to' our participants and can suggest a tensioned space.

As I will explain, this tension could become a problem in terms of the process and progress of the research and as such needs to be confronted. I would not be remote from this type of research, but adjacent and involved in all parts of the study (living in the vicinity of the site, attending events) and this is not without its challenges regarding the relationship with the B and her husband (Dwyer & Buckle 2009). Given the choice of participants and the lifestyle of the homeless/houseless community, a great deal was needed to be taken into account when planning the relationship I would have with B and her cohort, as well as how I would undertake the various parts of the bricolage of my data collection. It is possible, however, to gain a significant benefit from such a relationship in terms of the amount of rich data that can be recorded, as well as

the unique bond between researcher and participant (Dwyer & Buckle 2009).

With reference to limitations of the study, these could be imposed upon the process by research practices that were not satisfactory (Graziano & Raulin, 2013). Therefore, I needed to observe the participants in their natural environment and not impede this lived experience in any manner. This goes directly to the concept of 'inside/outside' roles (I reflect back to the preface poem). As Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 55) state "…the personhood of the researcher, including her or his membership status in relation to those participating in the research, is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation." As Adler and Adler (1987) purported (cited in Dwyer & Buckle 2009), I consider I would be an observer from a "distance" because I could not possibly be part of the homeless community and participate in their activities of daily living – I would be as close as practicable, living in a motel in Brooklyn and being able to observe regularly, not only the participants, but also other homeless people living in the environs. Further, Adler and Adler (1987), cited in Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 55), provide three classifications of 'membership roles': the 'observer on the periphery' as described, plus the second being a researcher who participates in some of the activities of the observed group, and the third a researcher who is an actual part of a membership with the participants and who partakes of their activities and belief systems.

In terms of limitations, Dwyer and Buckle (p. 59) go on to state:

> …there are costs and benefits to be weighed regarding the insider versus outsider status of the researcher. Being an insider might raise issues of undue influence of the researcher's perspective, but being an outsider does not create immunity to the influence of personal perspective.

In saying this, however, it is not imperative to be a member of a particular group to properly and accurately represent the group and arrive at certain understandings about what is observed. As long as the correct preparation and procedures have been undertaken, in an ethical and open and honest fashion, data collected can and will have veracity. In actual fact, an 'outsider' might be more equipped to shed light on the meanings of lived experience. Fay (1996),

cited in Dwyer & Buckle (2009, p. 59) states that "…often others external to the experience might be able to appreciate the wider perspective, with its connections, causal patterns, and influences, than one also internal to the experience."

There was also a need to be flexible (Graziano & Raulin 2013) to the extent that I would alter, as an example, a timeframe for an interview if there was an issue with the participants' attendance at the last minute. This could provide added data collection (as will be detailed in Chapters Four and Five) and another aspect of the research.

Pre-data is acknowledged and will need to be described given the type of participants and the nature of the site and the data collection process. Of course, I would have known the homeless community in Brooklyn and some of the challenges meeting their needs. This was a significant part of the pathway to developing a research project and formulating the question(s) that needed to be asked to capture the lived experience of the participants. The pre-data period of my research experience provided me with a solid platform upon which to build the actual project structure.

I detail the following factors in my research because of the potential of these factors to impact in some manner (either as a limitation or as a benefit) on the outcome of my study. Whilst I do not see my pre-data experiences with the homeless community in Brooklyn as being a limitation, the relationship I hoped to develop with them, building on the pre-data period, could very well be a detriment to my data collection. I would try as much as possible to keep the relationship with B and her community in a balance that would enable me to objectively collect and interpret the findings.

3.11.1. Relevant historical pre-data

Over a long period of time I have been interested in the entity of homelessness, and this pre-dates my opportunity to work closely with the homeless people and

service providers in the Hornsby area. Thiselton (2009, p. 32) states "…pre-understanding is a *negotiable and provisional* starting point, for which the word 'presupposition' may sometimes be misleading, since it often seems to suggest fixed beliefs that cannot be changed." My existing collected knowledge about the Brooklyn homeless people was essential to my eventual research project. I have mentioned in Chapter One the occasions I came to know of homelessness, and meet homeless people, and I increased this awareness over time. To further ratify the prior experiences, I noted certain reflections about some of these occasions:

> 29 May 2012:- (In the) early 80s: doing an assignment for a College of Nursing NSW course (Clinical Nursing Studies) and needing to look at an area and demographics. I chose Hornsby Local Government Area (LGA) and proceeded to assess all aspects of life. Were there any homeless people? I asked a police office and was told: NO! However, local people knew/know that we have many, many residents who occupy caves, tents, squats, bins, caravans, containers. I heard rustling in a clothing bin when walking by one night in Hornsby. Shocked, I realised that these noises were a person utilising a bin for a bed for the security and shelter it gave. So, we DO have homeless people.
> 29 May 2012:- The next time I was directly associated with homeless people was when I worked at The Australian Podiatry Association NSW (1998-2002) and helped set up a "Foot Clinic" at a men's hostel: Matthew Talbot Hostel for Homeless Men. JK (a podiatrist) had been undertaking a pilot project to set up a clinic for homeless men where volunteer podiatrists conducted sessions to help with foot problems. In the early 1999 this pilot became an actual Podiatry Clinic and once per week volunteer podiatrists went into Matthew Talbot to attend to the foot needs of homeless men. With ill-fitting shoes, poor weather conditions and the need to walk long distances, homeless people are prey to feet issues. To this day the clinic continues.
> 30 July 2012:- Next awareness; in 2002 I was approached and subsequently elected to the NSW Parliament as the State Member for Hornsby in the Legislative Assembly. This was immediately following my

work with the Podiatry Association. It soon became evident that, despite a whole raft of issues, the homeless problem was one that required attention. It had largely been ignored and was really quite invisible in the lives of the majority of residents. Homeless people, rough sleepers, were living along the Hawkesbury River (in caves, boats, containers) as well as throughout bushland. They also were to be found in Hornsby Park (opposite (Hornsby) Council Chambers and the (Kuring-gai Local Area Command - LAC) Police Station) as well as in stair wells, benches and walking in shopping areas. It appeared that not much was done for them from a local government perspective (HSC (Hornsby Shire Council) did not mention them in the Social Plan) or from a State Government perspective probably due to the belief that the LGA was not a hot spot. A briefing I requested revealed that the Regional manager of the Department of Housing had no statistics on the numbers of homeless people. In a few years it would become very obvious that these ignored people had to be considered in policy – a few incidents in Hornsby Park created the necessity to have a crisis meeting that led to the formation of the Hornsby Homelessness Task Force (HHTF – this later became to HKHTF: Hornsby Kuring-gai Homelessness Task Force).
5 March 2013:- POLICE 'COOK UP' in Brooklyn (this occasion is more fully described further on in the pre-data section).

RATIONALE: The above description allows the reader to learn about some of the early layers of information gathered by the researcher about homelessness. These experiences contributed to the tacit and explicit knowledge of the researcher. A number of the occurrences described occurred in the same LGA as the proposed research would be undertaken. This, too, is important because it sets the scene of homelessness as it exists in the LGA.

3.11.2. Pre-data: Hub at the Brooklyn Community Health Centre

As has been mentioned, I knew of the existence of people who lived in caves under the headland of the Brooklyn village. In early 2013 it was decided to hold

a gathering that would be called a ‘Hub’ (to give access to homeless individuals to as many services as possible). The following is a reflection about the Hub held in the Brooklyn Community Health Centre:

> 20 August 2013:- Health services available to the Brooklyn homeless community are in the form of a Community Health Centre with a number of ways by which homeless people can receive care. The most basic is the availability of a shower that can be used within the Centre. There is a GP Practice (with nurses and allied health personnel) and a number of homeless persons are treated at any one time for a variety of ailments including diabetes and leg ulcers. There is a trough adjacent to the shower where feet can be washed along with other articles. The Centre’s staff are very aware of the homeless community and tailor activities to include them; groups outside the area are linked into the Centre, either formally (Hornsby Hospital) or informally (Hornsby Homelessness Task Force).
> 20 August 2013:- Other groups that impact on the lives of homeless people are charity organisations and Churches. The Salvation Army have provided a barbeque at McKell park in Brooklyn each Thursday evening for many years and a local Berowra Church provides food at another point during the week. From time-to-time other food is provided at the (Brooklyn) Community Health Centre. There is also the entity of a ‘Hub’, a day-long event, that is arranged at the Centre where the target population is the homeless and the range of services, apart from fresh food and food bags, includes advice from the Department of Health, the Department of Housing and the Department of Community Services. Other aids, such as haircuts, clothing and access to Police and Council Staff, further assist a person living in homelessness.
> 25 February 2014 (further reflection on the Hub):- The first time I (knew of) B was approximately one year before I commenced my research project. I attended a homeless community event at the Brooklyn Community health centre where a number of services and donations for the Brooklyn homeless people were offered, along with food. There had been an official invitation to the Brooklyn homeless population to attend

the event. Both government and non-government representatives were available to speak with the attendees. The topics covered interviews about housing, attention to health concerns and social issues were addressed. Community members had made up bags of groceries and other household and personal effects to give to the homeless people. Police officers cooked a barbeque lunch. There were about twenty homeless attendees, and B was among them. A number of them brought along their dogs – these animals were also fed. Most likely B's dog, Lilly, (a female cross between a Chihuahua and a Jack Russell) is one of these dogs – I had not (seen) this animal yet.

RATIONALE: Similar to the first rationale, providing information about how the wider community interacts with the homeless community also assists the reader to understand relational aspects of these communities. I believe it is very helpful to be informed about actions designed to assist homeless people and how they were undertaken.

3.11.3. Pre-data: Police barbeque

This event was held 5 March 2013. The following reflection describes the relationship between the Police and the Council and the barbeque:

> 20 August 2013:- The relationship of homeless people with emergency services personnel is strong and goes back many years. There used to be a Police Station at Brooklyn (this closed a number of years ago) and Police were personally known to the homeless living there, usually from a demographic and not a law-enforcement perspective. Now Police based in Hornsby do regular patrols through the Brooklyn township and because the resident homeless have been living in the area for a long time, the Police know their history. The Rural Fire Service (RFS) personnel also know the homeless and combined with Police take an interest in the living arrangements mainly because of the potential of fire that could place them at risk (my recollection of this last point is that both

services took this responsibility extremely seriously).

20 August 2013:- The local Hornsby Shire Council also has an interest in homeless people who live throughout the local Government Area. The residents are often found occupying Council land precincts, for example parkland (where the caves are located), or more unusually living on a verandah of a Council-owned building. Council officers have, from time-to-time, expressed concerns about the places homeless people choose to occupy, that alcohol is consumed that may jeopardise harmony in the community, that numerous homeless people possess dogs and that some alleged damage has been occasioned to bushland, for example stripping the bush of vegetation.

20 August 2013:- The Police Command had been, over some months, in receipt of complaints about certain activities by homeless people in the Brooklyn area, specifically drinking whilst sitting in the small park adjacent to a restaurant and business offices. There had been reports that the homeless people were being loud and abusive and that their dogs had been threatening other local residents walking by on the street. In one instance a dog belonging to one of the homeless men ran at a person and the person was bitten. The dog was confiscated. One particular homeless man, who is estranged from the remainder of homeless people, had been reporting complaints to the Shire Council, the Police and also, to the alarm of the Police, he rang the local newspaper to further spread his discontent. A journalist decided to pursue the complaints with the view to write an article for one of the local newspapers. In order to avert the negative story…the Police decided to hold a communication day in Brooklyn with invitations to homeless residents, Commissioned Police Officers (as well as all local officers), all residents of Brooklyn, Hornsby Shire Councillors, and other groups interested in the welfare of the homeless, including the Hornsby Homelessness Task Force (I was in attendance) and a group known as The Dish. The HHTF is an advocacy group and The Dish is attached to St John's Uniting Church in Wahroonga and provides food at least twice per week at the site of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre. The event was to take the form of a barbeque where The Dish volunteers would cook, and

Police would assist in the serving of the food. The food consisted of predominantly sausages and bread. Whilst the gathering was a mixture of different types of people, the homeless did congregate around a covered barbeque table and seats with some interaction with other guests. There were about six homeless people in attendance. It was at this event that I became aware that there were two other homeless women apart from B (who I had not officially met at this point even though I knew of her from the Hub) who lived in caves almost above where we were all situated. One of the women, Y, also cohabited with another of the males in the group, Z, and they, too, were going to be married. The date for these nuptials was yet to be set (I was already aware that B and W were about to exchange vows). I admired the engagement ring on Y's finger. Y talked animatedly about the (her) upcoming wedding and about her studies. She was undertaking a higher degree, adding another qualification to her existing two qualifications. Her life had been dotted with hardship and sadness with the ending of a marriage and the death of a previous fiancée.

RATIONALE: As can be seen from the above description, many levels of society were drawn into providing some sort of help for those who were amongst the most vulnerable in the community. The above pre-data provides the reader with an insight into how the researcher came to be associated with the eventual participants.

3.11.4. Other reflections of Brooklyn homelessness

In order to broaden the picture of homelessness in Brooklyn there are a number of stories that are relevant:

20 August 2013:- M is a man who has lived in the Brooklyn township for many years. He is seldom seen except in the early morning. He used to live on the verandah of the Brooklyn Senior Citizens Centre, his belongings neatly arranged along the length of the covered area,

providing an insight into his personality. The verandah was extremely neat and extremely ordered. Hornsby Shire Council had enclosed the verandah, leading M to move close by to another verandah, this time at the front of a boarded-up Council building that used to be the home to an art gallery and then a shop. M replicated his very ordered 'home' on the new verandah and again displayed his personality. Early every morning he provided seed and other food to literally dozens of birds. The garden area in front of his verandah was covered with a number of different birds including bush turkeys and pigeons (I add here that the seeds he used caused different grasses to grow thus altering the type of Council grass originally planted).

14 January 2014:- Saw the homeless man who lives in the Hornsby Shire Library car park in the west arm of Hornsby Mall (could not see his face). He had his guitar and a coffee cup (takeaway) and other belongings on a seat. He had a bandage on one hand. He is thin and wearing well-worn clothing. He was walking around in a circle over and over again. He used to live under a tree, beside a clothing bin in one corner of the car park near steps until the hurricane pushed over the tree into the bin destroying both. He now lives on an old car seat under a bush.

21 June 2014:- Shopping in (a supermarket) in Westfield in Hornsby I saw a homeless man walking around the aisles and then he was immediately behind me in the (check-out) line. He had 2 items: a pear and a jar of peanut butter. He was counting his change (could he afford to purchase the items?). I decided to pay for these 2 things myself so asked him if he would be offended if I did so. He said he would not be offended. He said thank you as he left the store. The check-out man commented that I had done a nice gesture. He asked if I spoke to the homeless. He asked about the circumstances of the man – I said all homeless people are different and individuals and cannot be lumped together.

RATIONALE: Again, the above experiences fuelled the focus of the researcher on the issue of homelessness. They also added to the tacit and explicit

knowledge of the researcher, and as such increased the substrate of facts gathered about homeless people in the LGA.

3.11.5. Pre-data: Wedding

On Sunday 15 September 2013, B and W exchanged marriage vows at Brooklyn in the top park with the Salvation Army officiating at the ceremony. The following is an earlier reflection:

> 20 August 2013:- B and W are a couple living in a cave on the shores of the Hawkesbury River. They have been together for some time and have decided to get married. B, the prospective bride, has some health issues. She is well serviced by the (Brooklyn) Community Health Centre for her health requirements. The wedding is planned for the month of September and will be held on the top level McKell Park area. B has already obtained a wedding dress and this hangs inside the cave. Everyone is invited to the wedding.

Could the unlikely occasion of a wedding in a park, above the cave where the engaged man and woman lived, really happen? Who would attend such a wedding? And why did this event say so much about the couple as human beings and about how they lived their lives? As I walked up the Brooklyn hill towards the park (Upper McKell) I was pondering these questions as well as wondering how I came to be part of such an unusual celebration.

> *"In mid 2013 I had not formally commenced my research in the local Brooklyn area, had not finalised my question, but had had contact with the homeless people living in the community in Brooklyn. These few points of contact had introduced me to B and had enabled me to meet others who lived in homelessness adjacent to the general community. When in conversation with the (current) nurse manager of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre, I was given a verbal invitation to attend the wedding that would be held 15 September, three months hence. There*

was no paper invitation and the only instructions were to bring something to eat at the reception. I determined that I would buy a gift for B – a personal gift that she could either wear or use – as well as something that could be eaten at a later date. I was honoured to have been invited and excited at the prospect of attending such an occasion."

(Reflection, April 2016)

The suggestion of a marriage to be held between a homeless couple was being talked about a number of months prior to the proposed nuptials: talked about amongst some community members, church goers, as well as health care providers in the local Brooklyn Community Health Care facility and workers in non-government organisations. Earlier in 2013, when the barbeque function for homeless people had been arranged and overseen by police, and was attended by service providers to the disadvantaged, local council workers, church representatives, health professionals, Brooklyn residents, a number of police officers of various rankings and interested individuals, I did not know then that I would soon be commencing a detailed research project in cooperation with one homeless women in particular. Likewise, I did not realise at that time that I would be invited to witness a marriage between this woman and her homeless partner. On that day the prospective bride and groom were amongst the people standing around the picnic table. At this time B and W were not officially engaged, despite the talk of marriage.

"Irrespective of the fact that B said nothing audible, except for muffled comments to W, there was a presence about her participation around the BBQ table. I stood listening to another homeless woman speaking about her prospective wedding, when, in truth, I could not stop watching. For such a slight person, she was 'larger than life'. Each time I was in the same space as her, I was drawn to her and intensely studied her interactions with those around her. Mesmerism?"

(Reflection, April 2016)

My attendance at the wedding of B and W is part of my pre-data and I had a lead up period of increasing knowledge about B before attending the occasion.

Whilst the event was not in my actual data collection period, I have included specific details about the wedding, and everything that happened surrounding it, in Chapter Five due to the relevance of this marriage to the overall story about the couple living in a cave.

RATIONALE: The description of the wedding between B and W is an absolutely essential part of the story of homelessness/houselessness in the research site. The ability to attend such a wedding was such a unique occurrence, and this event included many aspects of the homeless existence. With regard to future data collection in the research process, how this wedding came to be a reality provided an excellent example upon which further information about the life experiences of these homeless individuals could be based.

3.12. Research timeline

It is important for those reading this document to know the sequence of events relating to the study so it can clearly be seen that clarity and logic was present. The following timeline provides a concise view of the course of the research schedule:

- PRE-DATA – from around March 2013 until June 2014
- ETHICS APPROVAL – December 2013
- RESEARCH COMMENCED – July 2014
- RESEARCH CONCLUDED – October 2015

3.13. Significant additional aspects

Brooklyn, being a very isolated part of the Local Government Area, was a perfect place for somebody who was seeking to locate a place to live 'rough'. The village was small (the 2016 Census listed a population of 722) and located at the end of a long (4 kilometre) road. The little township spreads out from a

central focus of a railway station and a marina, and occupies a strip of land along the Hawkesbury River (southern bank). Brooklyn is otherwise completely surrounded by the Muogamarra nature reserve. A major roadway (the M1) passes nearby, but it was necessary to take a convoluted route, leaving this roadway, to arrive into Brooklyn. Even the old route of the Pacific Highway did not pass directly through the village. The main northern railway also connected Brooklyn to the larger associated communities (for example, Hornsby and Gosford) and the railway station was a short walk to local amenities, as well as the bushland environs. As such it was easy for local community members, including the homeless, to leave the village to get to major shopping centres or a bank or other services, such as St Vincent de Paul. Similarly, it was also easy for a person or people from the Central Business District of Sydney to leave the built-up area and travel to Brooklyn. There was definitely a perception that Brooklyn was, by comparison, a much safer place in which to reside for homeless individuals. Interestingly, there were other challenges and dangers inherent in such an isolated and bushland place.

I would venture to say that the majority of the homeless residents had arrived by rail. The other means to arrive was by water – B's husband had done so and decided to stay in the bushland surrounding the village. His boat was moored offshore on the massive river. B also had a small boat (a 'tinny') moored close to the village.

Conversely, my safety, whilst undertaking the data collection, was raised with me, and became an issue for my supervisors, and I needed to put into place certain criteria to ensure I was in no danger whilst 'in the field'. This entailed contacting the local Police authorities to inform them when (date/time/venue) I would be conducting face-to-face interviews. Dancev and Ross (2014, p. 20) urged researcher safety and warned against the traumatisation of researchers and stated "…it is important to be aware that really good support systems for the researcher need to be in place before the research has started." I also would have to have a heightened awareness about my meetings with the participants – there could be other homeless people sitting with B and her husband.

3.13. Precis of methodology to be utilised

To summarise, once the research subject matter was selected, and the question was formulated, a robust, ethical methodology was investigated and compiled to compliment the nature of the qualitative study, as well as afford a thorough process by which to capture the rich data that was expected to be gathered. An emergent design, created at the time the methodology was being developed, was anticipated to greatly assist the researcher to systematically implement the planned methods – informal conversations, general observations, provision and use of artefacts, informal interviews, attendance at significant events. Utilising a narrative inquiry design with an ethnographic approach, the stories would be captured, and the lives of the participants would be recorded and evaluated. Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p.61) argue that:

> As qualitative researchers we are not separate from the study, with limited contact with our participants. Instead, we are firmly in all aspects of the research process and essential to it. The stories of participants are immediate and real to us; individual voices are not lost in a pool of numbers.

Given the research question and the number of participants changed over the duration of the planning for the study, it is important now to mention, by way of clarification, why I focussed on one person but included the 'voices' of others, both in B's direct community as well as in the communities that surrounded her. B is a very quiet person who portrays more about herself by her actions than she did with her words. In order to gather vital information about B I needed to capture the stories of her husband, her trusted friends and those who had contact with her in her life. This was considered to be the only way to properly elicit as much data as possible so that the lived experience of B could be portrayed.

Chapter Four

FINDINGS: PROVIDING A NARRATIVE CONTEXT

"Narrative itself is like a back door into a very deep place inside of us."
Ira Glass (2014)

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to display the data discoveries of a 'lived experience' methodology (van Manen 1990) related to B, the focal participant in the study, and the natural setting in which she resided, and the incongruous life she lived. In terms of the use of an emergent design, it is certainly true that once underway, my experience of the data collection process was iterative (Christie, Montrosse & Klein 2005; Pailthorpe 2017), and I did, indeed, undertake the interviews and observation (see Appendix 4), and then revisit aspects of the data I had assembled, utilising the opportunities that an emergent design offered.

The findings of my research will be unpacked utilising a dialogical narrative approach. However, as the research was guided by the precepts of identity formation within the field of sociology (Goffman 1959), and the use of a qualitative paradigm (Flick 2014), the focus of this work was not purely on B alone, but the web of "relationships and meanings" (Adams, Jones and Ellis 2014, p. 78) that constitute the foundations of the overall field and research method. The study was undertaken within the site in which B was living, and encompassed a number of different, but related, communities with which she was associated; all of them will be described and then, later, analysed. Furthermore, the use of stories and photographic examples (Riessman 2008; Creswell 2013) will provide the reader with meaningful insight into the lives to be investigated, which will illustrate the richness of the data collection over the duration of the research period (Charmaz 2014). To reiterate, as Creswell (2013) argues, the research process can be likened to weaving a cloth with its

structure and content fused together. This will then reflect the colour and texture of the lives to be illustrated. There is no doubt that the life experiences of B are complex and multi-layered, and often surprising.

Again, the research process was undertaken in order to answer the following question: What is the nature of the lived experience of one woman living in a houseless community? As has already been mentioned, the question changed a number of times over the course of the early part of the study, as an element of the process of discovery of data (Flick 2014) in this project.

For the study, one participant was the main focus, and the selection of this one participant was considered to be sufficient to provide rich data (Charmaz 2014). As was also described previously, in keeping with the gathering of data within the 'lived experience' design, the chapter develops this approach further through an ensuing *narrative* focus, retelling the stories so that the lived experiences can be more fully explored (Cresswell 2013). Because this form of research is deeply relational it is therefore intersubjective. Zlatev et al. (2008, p. 2) state that "…intersubjectivity is understood as *the sharing of experiential content (eg. feelings, perceptions, thoughts, meanings) among a plurality of subjects*." Whilst I was on the outside, I was acutely aware that I did develop an ever-increasing strength in my relationship with B, and so our interaction in the communication exchange was through the lens of our bond. Hence, in further reflecting this underpinning, and the heuristic nature of the entire process (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier 2011), the narratives I have selected to present in the data will contain the use of *first-person insertions* (Bochner, 2012). Goodall (2000, pp. 41-42) describes these narratives as:

> …stories borne of personal experience that don't end with just retelling the personal experience, but instead are designed – through conscious, stylistic deployments of language – to connect readers to larger patterns of lived experience and cultural meaning.

As detailed in the previous chapter, the gathering of research data occurred over a period of approximately two years (this included the pre-data observations) and was achieved in a multifaceted (Charmaz, 2014) and heuristic manner. Before I commenced the actual data collection, as has been

mentioned, there was the pre-data period whereby my contact with the proposed participants was built upon to the point I was able to request their participation. Over time I had developed a relationship with personnel at the Brooklyn Community Health Centre, with Police Officers at a local Brooklyn community barbeque and, as an observer attending the wedding of B and her husband, I witnessed the many facets of the marriage ceremony in the park in Upper McKell Park in Brooklyn. This period enabled me to become familiar with my participants before I created my research parameters and was an extremely valuable part of my emic knowledge. The following photograph (Fig 4.1) commences this dialogic process and is inserted to provide a starting point to the discussion about the data, and to give additional voice to the lived experience (Riessman, 2008). As can be seen, a very special occasion unfolded in a park setting where people from many walks of life attended.

Fig 4.1: The wedding party of B and W where the nuptials had been held in the Upper McKell Park in Brooklyn. The wedding took place in September 2013. Note the Altar and Lilly the dog

I have referred to the wedding as a pre-data experience leading to the commencement of the research collection; attending a wedding of two homeless people was unique and will be referred to again as the data is presented in this chapter. In commencing the heuristic process that I entered

into during the course of the research, it is this photo that depicts the position in which I often found myself: to examine the contents of the photograph is to show that the scene appears to describe a usual wedding, but nothing could have been further from this understandable assumption.

Clearly in the photograph there is a wedding group, this being the participant, B, with her new husband, W, and her bridesmaids and dog, Lilly. But, similar to narrative, there are layers beneath the surface (Riessman 2008) that are not immediately visible. The photograph also alludes to the theoretical dilemmas I would face as a researcher, in what I was witnessing, and how I would present the data to the reader. There appears to be nomos (Berger 1967), that is, the scene contains what would be expected at a wedding, but delving further into the apparent circumstances featured in the photograph, the bride and groom and the bridal party are all homeless people (or were – one of B's sisters had recently moved out of a headland cave), the gathered guests are a mixture of the communities with which the couple communicate, including the wider homeless community, and the site sits above the caves where the homeless live. The photograph is included to portray the circumstances of one of the ways in which B and her cohort communicated with the world outside the homeless community. It reflects on my subsequent data collection and is indicative of the main points I raised in Chapter Three concerning the need to have a multi-pronged approach to gathering phenomenological evidence about B's life.

In order to present the extensive data collection with some sort of logical flow, this chapter will be divided into subsections that will include a description of the site, paragraphs detailing the stories that became the findings, and more information about the participant, her contacts and homelessness and houselessness in general. The description of the site is essential to set the scene for the presentation of the data – it will add to the already described geographical, topographical and spatial scene, including detailed narratives concerning the village, the parks, and the cave where B and W lived. The stories will be told in sections, beginning with the geographical and topographical reflections, then moving onto an enlargement about B, her dog,

her family and social history and about her relationship with the man who would become her husband. It will tell B's life story, her transition to becoming homeless and her survival in a variety of theatres of disadvantage. There will be reference to the testimonies of people who played significant roles in the life of B. The subheadings will enable a further description of the wedding, this being the immediate entrée of the researcher into the research, will view the types of relationships B had in relation to the individuals and communities with which she came into contact, and will examine the death and funeral of W. A more in-depth analytical dissection will be provided in Chapter Six, and this will present a holistic unpacking of the research undertaken and will draw together all the elements of what is revealed in Chapters Four and Five.

4.2. Data collection: framing propositional knowledge

There was a long journey to the commencement of my research. I had gained a great deal of local knowledge about the area, and the existence of homeless people in the bushland and living in boats. As has been stated:

> *"When selecting the subject for my research, and assessing the need to choose the participants, I initially decided to select a number of homeless people from different sites across the Local Government Area. I had the intention of comparing and contrasting these people and the responses to the question I would formulate and the means by which I would collect data. I soon became aware, and this was to my utmost surprise, that I would be comparing apples with oranges in that the reasons for the homelessness, as well as the individual circumstances in which homeless people found themselves, were so diverse as to be impossible to successfully formulate research methodology."*
>
> (Reflection whilst constructing Chapter Four, April 2016)

Once I had decided upon the subject for the research, selected the proposed participants, given thought to the methodology to be undertaken, approached the homeless couple and commenced a communication with them, over one

year had elapsed. Following on from the granting of ethics approval, thorough explanation of the research process between the researcher and the participants, and the signing of consent forms, the collection of data finally commenced.

I undertook three semi-structured interviews in 2014 on the following dates: 14 July, 3 August and 25 August. There were numerous other interactions, some anticipated and others of a completely spontaneous nature. On a number of occasions, a date set for an interview had to be delayed because, usually, B was absent. When these occasions happened, I would have a conversation with her husband and sometimes other homeless people who were in the vicinity. I initially worried about the increasingly regular absences of B, but one pre-arranged camera collection meeting saw only B present. This meeting took place 26 November 2014.

> 4.45-5.30pm. Drove from uni to Brooklyn to see B and W to collect the cameras (disposable). Texted W to say I was running late and the reply was he would not be at the picnic site, only B. I found B sitting alone at a picnic table with Lilly (their dog)…We spoke about W – he had fallen down a cliff and sustained ?fractured ribs. He apparently had bruises and scrapes and was in pain. He had decided to stay in the cave due to this. He was taking medication for pain.

REFLECTION: This was an interesting change from my usual experience – B came alone to meet me. She had not cancelled the meeting. Could it be she felt she was now in a position of control? That W was injured and somehow less powerful than he had been? Or was it B was afraid that W had sustained a serious injury that might need intervention?

The spontaneous interludes occurred when I accidentally met B; one meeting in particular was extremely insightful. From my 'In The Field' notes I recorded the following interaction:

11 August 2014 (I am in Brooklyn - as a temporary resident living in the motel -

and in the main shopping/marina area).

12.15pm. Saw B…and called out to her. Asked if she would like a coffee with me. She said yes. She had bought a pie.

REFLECTION: Did B feel obligated [to say yes]?

12.45pm. Whilst B and I were walking back to the (café – where I was usually seated for my field work each day) a homeless man passed in the opposite direction – B said: "Hi O." He smiled at us both and kept walking.

REFLECTION: B as part of her homeless community.

1pm. Sat down at (the café) to have a coffee. Lilly was with us on a very long lead (but not held by B or attached anywhere). A woman expressed concern over Lilly, thinking she had no owner. (She) wanted to tie her up. B said it was her dog.

REFLECTION: Lilly had 'rights' that other dogs did not.

1.30pm. We ordered two coffees: lattes, ordinary milk in takeaway cups LARGE. And chatted. I did not tape the conversation because it was not arranged that I do so.

REFLECTION: B ordered exactly the same as me, even down to the disposable cup.

1.45pm. The waitress brought out a bowl of water for Lilly. And gave us Tiny Teddies (biscuits) and a bowl of chocolate. We dipped a few Tiny Teddies.

REFLECTION: These actions on behalf of the waitress were very accommodating (I had only ever had one biscuit and NO chocolate up until that time). I'm not sure it was because of B and her obvious 'homelessness'. Or because of me – she knew I was researching the topic of homeless people.

2pm. B was worried about her being with me [or appeared to be] and not getting back to W (who was sitting in his usual place at the picnic/barbeque tables at the end of McKell Park (Lower). She tried to call him – he did not pick up.

REFLECTION: B is anxious she was not with W. Very interesting, even though puzzling, reaction to sitting with me. Hard to fathom why B felt so seemingly uncomfortable – was this because she felt she had no 'permission' to sit with me and talk with me? Or would she really rather not sit with me?

[A number of homeless people were walking past the café near the marina at this time of the afternoon – noted by me whilst I was with B having the coffee]

REFLECTION: This timeframe could be a higher activity period in the homeless daily schedules.

3pm. …B left to re-join W at Lower McKell Park around 2.15pm [she took her coffee and the biscuits and chocolate with her].

REFLECTION: B appeared not to be comfortable with accompanying me for a coffee because W was not present and could not be contacted. She appeared relieved to leave my company to seek out W. Is this a sign of the power he has over her? [Another more recent thought about this: perhaps she did not wish to be sighted with me?]

I had already undertaken two of the three semi-structured interviews (as I have already stated, the first taking place 14 July 2014, and the second taking place 3 August 2014) with the couple and had observed B was very influenced and almost subservient to her husband. The interviews were insightful, and the above interlude was also informative about the relationship of B and W, and their lived experience both as a married couple and as people who lived in a fringe community parallel to Brooklyn. The three semi-structured interviews will be referred to in relation to the forthcoming data presentation and present specific aspects of the 'lived experience' as it is revealed.

4.3. Informal discussions and semi-structured interviews: recording life stories

In the second half of 2014 I officially commenced my data collection following many months of pre-data observation. I had met with B and W and negotiated the terms of the data collection and had planned to spend significant stretches of time in Brooklyn. One of the tasks I needed to get underway was familiarising myself with the village of Brooklyn and meeting other members of the community.

Went to the General Store (at the marina) to engage in a discussion with

> the proprietor about the homeless who came into the store (like B did a week ago – bought supplies (bread and milk) – then took rubbish out of the store). A number of homeless people come into the shop to buy supplies and alcohol. There is no formalised arrangement with the manager ie to give free/subsidised items for work provided by the homeless. There are some homeless people who charge their phones in the General Store. One man (homeless) who stole food has been banned from entering the store. Some of the homeless are reminded to take a shower (because of body odour and mostly in summer) but others are okay in this area. Mostly there is a good relationship with the manager and his staff. *Addition: The store manager said the Brooklyn homeless who come into his shop think they are "HOUSELESS" NOT homeless.
>
> (From Journal Excerpts 7 August, 2014)

This was an example of the types of interchange I was fortunate to have concerning the village and the presence of homeless people in the environs. Over the months, I would meet a number of local residents and receive sometimes competing opinions about homelessness in the area. Some of these views will appear in Chapters Four and Five. I also needed to learn about Brooklyn and its history, and its experience with those who sought refuge in bush areas as opposed to more traditional dwellings.

As I spoke informally with each of the key participants, and gathered their life stories, these conversations provided a valuable insight into circumstances that may have existed before the individual became homeless. This further added to my knowledge about the lives of the homeless and was important because of the extemporaneous chitchat – there was discovery of pieces of information in an informal setting that may not otherwise have been heard. The use of informal discussions to hear about life histories or stories, gathered in a mutually comfortable manner, offers ways to gain insight that few other methods can, because the verbal interaction is unplanned and unsolicited (Flick 2014). Once a trust was developed between the participants and the interviewer, the free flow of conversation produced comments that a recorded session may not.

Sometimes there would be an uncomfortable feeling about the mood of the extra people, or the conversation would stray onto subjects I did not wish to pursue. At other times I, and my participants, would be the only people in the vicinity of the area where the interviews were being conducted (usually at a Hornsby Shire Council constructed picnic table and shelter), so I needed to be constantly aware of my surroundings (and keep a charged mobile phone with me at all times). However, by and large, I felt safe with my participants and had no unpleasant encounter during the period of the collection of data.

The ethnographic nature of the research was greatly assisted by the fact I stayed in Brooklyn Village for long stretches of time to enable me to easily access the site and observe the day-by-day flow of village life. The layout of Brooklyn was such that I could take a short walk to an observation point that was central to the marina, the shopping precinct and the residential areas. I managed to take up residence in the local motel for periods of time as follows:

- July/August/September 2014 for 6 weeks
- November 2014 for 3 weeks
- February/March 2015 for 4 weeks
- May 2015 for 2 weeks

During this time, I was able to engage with not only my participants, but also other homeless people, as well as local residents.

4.4. The site: parks, caves and other things

This research was undertaken in a region that is simultaneously isolated and challenging with its seclusion, whilst being sought out, given the existence of a village (with its parallel homeless community), and its beauty, being on a magnificent waterway. The site is integrally related to the people who choose the live there. It is involved in their existence, concurrently placing barriers in front of every resident whatever their story. In order to appropriately introduce the research and its processes, paradigms and findings, a full description of the area is essential.

To reach the research site it is necessary to travel north by car, from the built up areas of the Local Government Area, along a major motorway, across a massive river via a modern road bridge, then veer off onto a less major carriage way, completing a one hundred and eighty degree turn, that sees the driver travelling in exactly the opposite direction. The river is traversed once more (travelling south), a historic bridge is also crossed, and a left-hand turn is taken leading onto a four-kilometre road.

With houses initially sporadically appearing along both sides of the road, plus bushland encroaching on the roadway and the dwellings, the journey leads to a small village.

Fig 4.2: The main street of the Brooklyn village

The massive river can be seen all along the left-hand side of the road, with a national park covering the land behind the buildings on the right-hand side, this area leading up to a significant ridge. The river is blue/grey depending on the weather and time of day; the bush is green (except if a bushfire has ravaged the area). The further east travelled along the road, the more houses are seen located on each side. Nearing the end of the four kilometres a large oval is passed and a rail bridge is crossed. Train transport is another means to access the site. As is an infrequent bus service. Finally, a small village unfolds along the road leading to a central built-up area.

Examination of the photograph of the main street of Brooklyn (Fig 4.2) shows the old building facades of the village, framed by the steep ridge and dense bushland. Sleepy and quaint are two adjectives that come immediately to mind. The village has grown up from early colonial days. To travellers driving north or south along the major motorway the only clue to the existence of this site is a predominance of boats (of all shapes and sizes) on the waterway, and its small bays and tributaries; it is clear this place is a site of pleasure (cruising vessels and houseboats) and toil (prawn and fishing vessels plus barges and boats that deliver mail, supplies and people all around the waterway). Apart from the water vessels, the only other way to tell there is a small village is from the signage.

The beauty of the overall area is difficult to describe. With the massive river surrounded by picturesque bushland, plus a number of outlying islands, there was, and is, a tremendous lure to those seeking a quieter, less built-up lifestyle, with amazing views up and down the waterway. If it was very secluded and 'secret' in the beginning, this has changed somewhat as the years went by. Now it is a very expensive place in which to purchase a dwelling. There are, living side-by-side, individuals, families, business people; some of these people are longstanding, generational families, whilst others are newly arrived into Brooklyn. With each passing year the older styles of village life are disappearing, and either renovations or demolition lead to new structures being built. Old and modern sit together in a mix that wants to keep the quaint ways but demands up-to-the-minute services as well. The same could be said about the types of people who live in Brooklyn.

The town centre has a combination of houses, shops and restaurants. Cafes and fish and chips abound. There are two general stores, one also selling alcohol. An information technology shop that doubles by providing postal services and post office boxes. A chemist. A real estate agent. A hall for seniors. The community health centre. A delicatessen. A laundromat. One small motel. A clothing store. And a pub. There is a marina from which there are boat launching and repair facilities. There is a wharf from where a ferry leaves, as well as the large vessel that delivers mail and supplies up and down

the river. The sport and recreation consist of leisure vessels, fishing boats, ‘tinnies’ (small aluminium fishing or ‘runabout’ boats) to get around, some houseboats, and kayaks and dragon boats as examples of water interests. The railway station is adjacent to the marina area and has exceptionally high stairs to gain access to and egress from the platform.

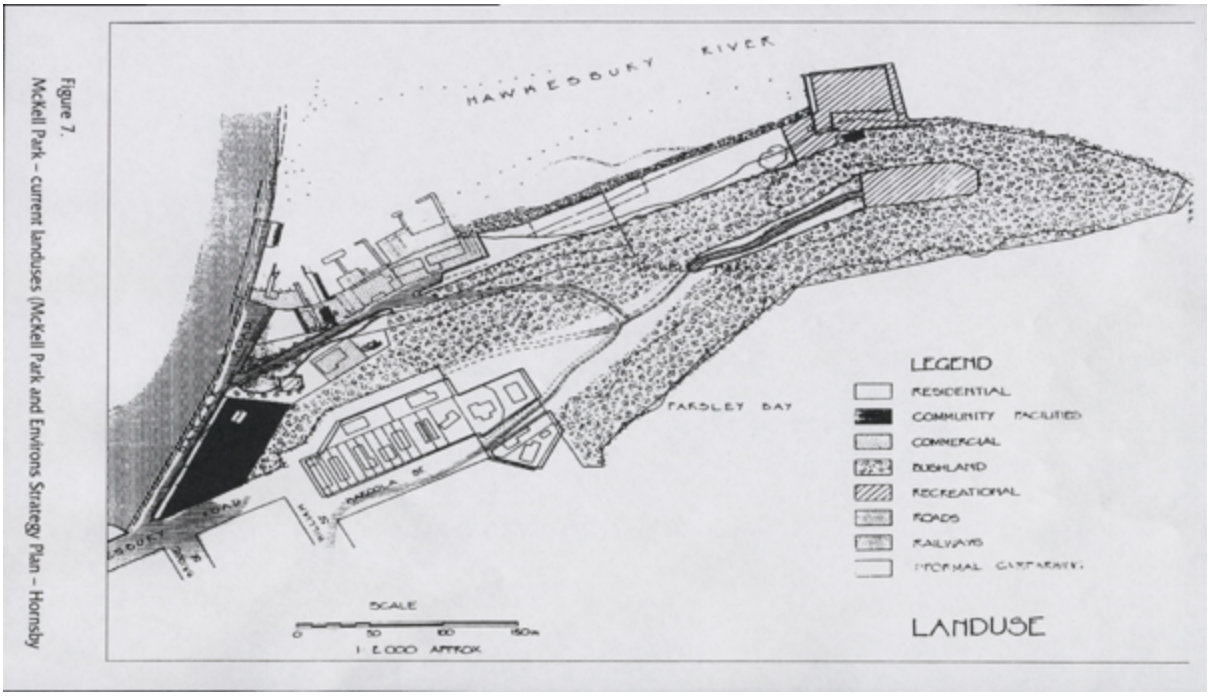


Fig 4.3: Map of the village of Brooklyn (photograph courtesy of TR)

The street layout is quite simple (Fig 4.3) with everything within walking distance, including to three parks, two that offer picnic and barbeque facilities (including toilet blocks – significant for homeless people). Apart from the long road coming into the village, there is another main road going to a large boat launching area, and another that dissects the marina precinct passing one park and leading to the two others.

4.4.1. Parks

As has been described, the site encompasses the village, the surrounding bushland, the marina and a boat launching area, including the three parks. These parks are very important in the lives of the local homeless people.

Adjacent to the railway station is one park colloquially referred to (by homeless people) as ‘Bottom Park’. This park abuts a steep incline leading to higher ground, where village residents live, and another large park is located. There are stairs carved into the rock face affording passage diagonally towards the upper area. They are uneven and misshapen, and littered with leaves and some branches from the trees surrounding the grass area of the park. There are tall palm trees, some well-established pine trees and gum trees, along with native shrubs and plants. The grass area used to hold a table and benches at one end, but these had been removed. Upturned milk crates took the place of these facilities.

In another part of the park, behind a grove of trees, about six chairs sit in a semi-circle position, and had been put there to provide another social gathering area for homeless inhabitants. Occasionally a solitary chair was noticed standing alone in the middle of this park. This chair would come to hold significance with regard to B. Opposite this park there is a large car parking area that accommodates cars belonging to tourists and to residents, who live on a nearby island with a tiny community and water access only.

Fig 4.4: Stairs from Lower McKell Park leading to Upper McKell Park. W usually spent all day in the lower park with B joining him for periods of time (photograph courtesy of B)

The second park (Fig 4.4) on the lower area is located further east of the

marina. It is immediately under a sandstone escarpment that holds a number of the caves in the headland. To arrive at this park, it is necessary to walk through a very large car park, past a children's play area, the path at that point also being adjacent to a medium-sized boat mooring area. The park sits beside a fenced seawater swimming baths with a small beach, a jetty, and overlooks the massive Hawkesbury River. It extends out to a grassy point that is east of the Brooklyn footprint. Another set of stairs leads from this park to the upper park area. There is a toilet located near to the swimming area, and a number of covered picnic tables and barbeques are scattered across the grass expanse of this park. The majority of my interviews and conversations took place in this park.

Fig 4.5: W sitting at the picnic table in Lower McKell Park (photograph courtesy of B)

To gain access to the third park requires a walk, or a drive, along a road ascending to the top of the headland. The aforementioned rock stairs are another means. The park is almost totally surrounded by thick bushland in a horseshoe fashion. Upon completing the ascent to the top of the sandstone outcrop, the land opens up revealing a large, grassy, oval-shaped area with covered picnic tables and barbeques on each side, and a large flat area in the middle of the park. There is an interrupted view of the mighty river through the

trees. A toilet building is located at the car park end of the clearing. Many of the caves are located immediately below this park.

The parks have a very high usage, particularly at the weekends. Local village people spend time there, as well as those who come from surrounding river outposts. Tourists also flock to the area – it is famous for its views, ambience and bushland perimeter. It is to the parks that the homeless also gravitate (Fig 4.5). In fact, a number (including W) spent most of their entire days sitting at the provided picnic tables.

4.4.2. Caves

Another impression of the village is that it resembles a hideaway. Anyone who knows about this place, and understands its history, can appreciate the attributes of such an area to the local residents who call it home. Generations of people have lived there (including First Nations tribes), have sought it out (from colonial days exploring up the mouth of the river, as well as overland), have created businesses (oyster, fish and prawn enterprises, restaurants, as well as houseboats and marinas for water activities), have built roads (minor and major), have constructed bridges (both road and rail), have made homes (makeshift tents as well as wood, bricks and mortar), and have added to the rich history the area possesses (Parkes is told to have visited Brooklyn). Because of the geography of the area, and its seclusion, individuals over time have sought it out to 'escape' civilisation, or whatever it was that saw many of them unable to live in a more conventional manner. This included homeless people looking for a safe(r) place to live (as opposed, for example, to living in central Sydney). The ample number of caves situated under the high cliffs and land masses provided the means by which to set up 'camps'.

A pre-data reflection is as follows:

> 20 August 2013:- The best way to enlighten one person to the plight of another is to describe a situation in narrative. My research focussed on

homelessness and in my chosen area I have a number of homeless people who live on the edge of the wider community. They have lived this way for decades. In the Brooklyn area many reside in caves. These caves are often full of the essentials of life, for example, cooktop with gas bottle fuel, cooking implements, electrical items activated by generators (and, more recently, solar - photovoltaic - cells), bedding, chairs and sundry items including, on one occasion, a wedding dress. With homeless people it is important not to close one's mind – there are always surprises.

20 August 2013:- The caves along the escarpment facing north over the river are some of the places homeless people choose to live. These caves are isolated, cavernous and accessible. Of course, there are other places in which people seeking a shelter live: containers, boats and verandahs to name a few. A collection of homeless people has set themselves up in caves and they either live singularly or as couples forming a sub-community within the wider community that is Brooklyn. From anecdotal evidence, the general community is divided about the presence of homeless people in the area. Some dislike them whilst others either tolerate their existence or don't really think about the homeless at all.

One reflection of a Journal entry (1 September, 2014) depicts a positive attitude about homeless people in the Brooklyn environs:

5.15pm. In the chemist discussing (homelessness) with the chemist (young female) – she has had many conversations with (homeless people) over the months she has been in the Bridge Street location. A man entered who added to our conversation about his discussions with the homeless. He said he gave them vegetables from his yard sometimes. He knew W and stated when W was not drunk he had learned things to say.

REFLECTION: This scenario reflects the matrix relationship between the homeless and some of the local community.

Further to homeless people and explorers of the river coming to the area, there have been many tent cities set up over time to accommodate people who were working on the construction of specific infrastructure. The Brooklyn rail bridge was one such project, and it is still the main northern railway route in New South Wales. Old photographs show evidence of the community, as it was when the Hawkesbury River still had a ferry to enable crossing from one side to the other. It is also a time when some of the early industries started up – bottled oysters were sold to ferry passengers; these early sales led to very large oyster farming projects in subsequent years.

As previously mentioned, there are caves dotted along the underside of the headland. The largest of these caves is occupied by the participant and her partner (Fig 4.6). This cave has been created from a massive overhang of sandstone and sits directly under the top park. The only way to access the

Fig 4.6: A photograph of the cave from the initial approach to the rock overhang (that can be clearly seen). The two-man tent is visible at the far end of the cave area

cave is via the upper park. It is necessary to scale down steep and uneven

rocks to reach a flat area that allows entrance into the cave. The living area is under the overhang, and the cave looks like it has been scooped out of the sandstone.

To specifically describe the interior of the cave, there is a defined arrangement as follows: to the right is bag storage area, and an apparently well-stocked kitchen, complete with a visible butane stove and a large casserole dish; then there is the lounge/living area with an animal skin covered sofa and mat-covered dirt floor; then a library of books in milk crates; then a bedroom that consists mainly of a tent; then another storage area. There is no bathroom, with a toilet and wash basin located in the toilet block in the park above. Showering is achieved by attendance at the community health centre in the village. A low net barricade marks out the edge of the cave where the cleared area meets the bush. This barricade also serves as some sort of barrier to the very numerous bush turkeys that wander, officially protected, around the camp site, as well as in the village and surrounding parks and bushland. Immediately to the left of the cave there is a makeshift clothes line and some low bowls filled with water. There are a number of large sealed tubs, the type that might be used on a sailing boat. B used one of these tubs to store her wedding dress and thus kept it white.

Now looking again at the kitchen (Fig 4.7), there are a few cabinets and some acquired shelves. Natural rock crevices also make shelves that serve as storage sites for bottles of various unidentifiable substances. Pots and pans and some plates and cutlery are visible, as is a dog bowl for Lilly. The kitchen, as does the entire cave, has a great semblance of order in terms of the sequence of the ‘rooms’ and how the items are stored. There is no refrigerator, or any means to keep anything cold or even cool. B has diabetes and requires insulin injections a number of times per day. She has a special container to store her insulin vials so that they are maintained at a satisfactory temperature. I observed B take a small black backpack with her to either Hornsby or elsewhere to shop – if she bought an item that was perishable she would be using/cooking this the same day it was purchased. On one occasion she bought mince and discussed how she would prepare it following one of our

meetings together. Water would be brought down to the cave as required. This was hard work because water weighs a great deal, and the rock face leading to the cave was rough and difficult to scale. There is a smallish circular table with two mismatched chairs situated in the divide between the kitchen and the lounge area. The table is on an angle, probably unavoidable, and appears to be unstable.

Fig 4.7: The kitchen area of the cave. The butane burner can be seen of the far left as can the use of the rock shelves as shelf and cupboard areas

The lounge/living area is a larger space, being situated in the centre of the deeply gouged out cave. The rock floor area covered with the rugs, and perhaps thick, coarse blankets, looks to be quite wide, extending almost to the net barricade. Adornments include some cushions on the sofa and a number of trinkets and larger items lining the cave wall, some of these being a bow and a set of arrows. There is also an oil painting depicting a man and a woman that B had painted. The entire cave appears to be in a brown colourway. The sandstone rock formations of the cave walls add to this colour scheme.

The next section, the library, is filled with milk crates and entirely devoted to books. The milk crates are stacked one on top of the other, and side by side. Each one is filled to (more than) capacity with books: reference and other non-

fiction publications covering a wide range of topics. This 'library' gives the impression of great importance in the cave; its contents appear to be held in high value by the owner of the books.

One two-man tent fills the next space in the cave. It is surrounded by various belongings, some of these in a chaotic heap. It is possible to see inside the tent, and pillows and bedclothes are visible. This is where two adults and one dog (the family) sleep. Apart from the obvious provision of warmth the enclosure would provide, it also gave the couple protection from the wildlife that apparently regularly entered the area.

Gazing into the distance from this cave (Fig 4.8) the view is breathtaking: the river flows strongly quite a long way below; there are a few trees offering some protection from the weather, although a strong south-easterly wind would be very unpleasant; to the right of the cave, again beneath it, there is a medium-sized bay with the large boat-launching area for fishing and pleasure craft. Far below, and out of sight, is a roadway, and trucks rumble along it from time-to-time emptying garbage bins.

Fig 4.8: View from the cave of B and W of the Hawkesbury River (photograph courtesy of B)

On the outskirts of this 'camp' there were a number of items, a discarded old

fashioned wheelchair being one of them. It looked neglected with bushland growing over it and some parts are broken. Then there is a surprise: small clusters of solar cells are positioned in the direct sunlight to gain their charge. These units are used to provide power to a DVD player used to watch movies. Strung across the roof of the cave there are small LED lights that enable some illumination at night to be possible. I was struck by the contradiction existing in the cave environment.

4.4.3. Other things

The genesis of the relationship that eventually developed with homeless people, in the context of my research, occurred many years before the concept for this research was created. For more years than can be remembered there have been homeless people living in and around the Hornsby Local Government Area in which the chosen site for the research is situated. Residents in the general community had been witness to a number of aspects of homelessness, and some of these situations had been recorded in newspapers and magazines, and many have been discussed amongst community members in meetings and in social arenas. Homelessness was present across the area in a number of forms – couch surfers, park dwellers, rough sleepers in bushland regions, rough sleepers in more built-up areas, people who slept in cars or containers, cave dwellers. Sadly, levels of government, with responsibility for the area, had largely ignored the presence of the homeless population – my residence and work within the LGA had observed this lack of commitment over many years; a recent social plan made no reference to homelessness.

> *"The fact I had lived in the area for more than thirty years, and had engaged in a number of roles within this area, meant I was able to observe that homeless people had lived in the area consistently for decades but were not sufficiently recognised by government. This led to an almost invisible status for these homeless people and a very disadvantaged position for them because their needs were mostly not recognised and therefore not met. Very few services were available to*

them and hundreds of open files existed in the filing cabinets of St Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army."

(Reflection, April 2016)

The Local Government Area has sixty per cent bushland and is flanked by the major river and contains two more minor waterways in the north. The southern boundaries are a confluence of high density living, smaller residential areas and uninhabited national parklands. The terrain definitely lent itself to people who sought safer shelter than that available in the Central Business District of Sydney. Many had arrived from outside precincts and set up some sort of existence on the edges of the general community. The makeup of the area allowed homeless people to live in their choice of protective cover (if any), and gain access to 'civilisation' where they could obtain a number of necessities of life that included water, food and some clothing, as well as limited services to help with transport and health. Homeless people could be seen going about their daily lives, but many were invisible, either because they hid themselves from the general public or they merely were not immediately identified as homeless.

"Whilst in the field, observing the local Brooklyn community and the homeless people who moved around it, a waitress in the café where I sat asked what I was working on. When I replied I was looking at homelessness she commented on homeless people she had seen sleeping in the grounds of a nearby hospital. I told her there were homeless people in Brooklyn. She expressed surprise at this. She had not seen anyone who she thought was homeless despite homeless people daily walking by the front of the establishment in which she worked."

(Reflection whilst constructing Chapter Four, April 2016)

The Hornsby LGA, in the north of Sydney, had a multicultural demography with a mixture of races and cultures in high percentage in the main Central Business District. The outlying communities were comprised of a majority of Anglo-Saxon heritage members. The shape of the LGA enabled many communities and

villages where residents lived to be adjacent to the substantial bushland contained within the land mass. The presence of the significant bushland and rugged shorelines provided natural land structures, that included caves, and these were utilised by homeless people as places to live, either in an itinerant fashion or as a more permanent place in which to reside. Throughout the LGA there were numerous caves – Berowra, Hornsby, as well as Brooklyn. As has already been stated, the cave that the female participant lived in was situated in a northern headland overlooking the massive river and in easy walking distance to the village of Brooklyn; the area was isolated in itself being over thirty kilometres from the main business district.

> *"In 2011 I had some information about the remote village that became the site of my research when my research question was formulated. My information about the area included that it had a community health centre, a school and a railway station. I had little knowledge about the fact that homeless people lived in the area and had done so for a long time. At that stage I had not met or seen the homeless residents. This was despite knowing that the wider area had a number of homeless people."*
>
> (Reflection, April 2016)

TR, a resident of Brooklyn, retired school principal and local historian, stated (Interview 12 January, 2015) that as early as the 1890s there were homeless people in Brooklyn – the early name for Brooklyn was Bywater. TR had lived in the area for most of his life, and knew a great deal about Brooklyn and its history. TR said:

> *"There were people living on Long Island [adjacent to mainland Brooklyn] as early as the 1870s [and these people lived in] tents and huts. It was linked with the fact there is a river, and the river suggests there was access to fish."*
>
> (Interview 12 January, 2015)

As has already been stated, across the Local Government Area homeless

people lived in a variety of places, under a number of different circumstances. There were many people living in homelessness according to local service organisations; these organisations regularly reported contact with homeless people. The reasons these people had become homeless were varied – mental illness, drugs and alcohol, financial difficulties and domestic violence featuring predominantly. The reason the homeless people who lived in the LGA remained thus was due, in a significant part, to lack of social housing opportunities.

The Brooklyn Community Health Centre was a central place that most, if not all, local homeless people visited either regularly (for a shower or service provision) or when they had a medical need. The nurses, doctors and ancillary staff were very aware of the homeless population and were extremely effective in their provision of care. JA was the nurse manager of the Centre for many years (she is now retired) and came to know B and W very well – she became a trusted person. B and W had a wonderful advocate (JJJ) who they met when this person helped set up a weekly barbeque in the top McKell Park 14 years before. JJJ had regular, almost weekly, contact with the couple and was very likely the closest person to them outside their homeless community. The relationship between B and JJJ, in particular, cannot be understated – it was based on trust and understanding over a very long period of time.

Most shop keepers in the Brooklyn area have regular contact with homeless people, who come out of their caves, or the bushland, or disembark their boats to collect mail or purchase items such as alcohol, food or mobile phones. W has a Post Office Box in Brooklyn. He pays very little for this because he claimed he lived at Dead Horse Bay, and this is a place not serviced by the usual mail delivery. Therefore, the PO Box is very cheap for W. The general store at the marina sells a diversity of items, including food and alcohol. W purchased some of his daily intake of wine and spirits from this venue. He used a Coca Cola bottle and poured his wine into this container; perhaps this was to disguise the fact he was drinking alcohol most of the day. The Post Office/technology store sells mobile phones and related equipment to all including the homeless people who want a phone. Both W and B had such a

phone.

4.5. More on 'B'

The main participant, B (Fig 4.9) is a child of two immigrants from the United Kingdom and one of five siblings, four girls and one boy. A set of twins is

Fig 4.9: A photograph of B. "This is one of the happiest photos taken of B over the study period. Even on her wedding day she did not smile, but rather looked like a nervous and worried bride."

(Reflection, April 2016)

included in this mix. A description of her siblings follows (First recorded interview 14 July, 2014, pp.5-6):

> *Researcher (R): So you have three sisters and one brother?*
> *B: AA, (and two others). AA is the youngest.*
> *R: Where does the boy fit in?*

B: He is AA's twin.
R: (The two others), where are they?
B: (One) the next one down [from B who is the eldest]. (The other) is the one after that.
R: Are they living in NSW?
B: (One) is living in Newcastle. (One) is in Victoria…with her husband and kids.
R: AA is here (in Brooklyn in another cave). Is (One) in Ballarat? (B said yes). Do you have family still in Ballarat?
B: Yes.

A reflection on the childhood of these children lays bare one of hardship and abuse. The family home was in country western Victoria. Whilst they endured significant difficulties growing up to adulthood, the siblings did not lose touch with each other, and three of the sisters had actually lived as homeless individuals in the caves located within the research site. One of these sisters later moved to Northern New South Wales, whilst the other continued living in an adjacent cave (to B) until she moved to a unit in Ryde. B persisted living in her cave high above the Hawkesbury River, but an immediate past tragedy, the sudden horrific death of her fiancé in Adelaide, added to the long list of traumas she had endured over her fifty-two years. There was no doubt B fell into a deep emotional hole following the loss of her fiancé. Over her life, B had not only endured significant abuse, but also tragic events. It was into this scenario W became significant in her life.

W had had a traumatic past as well. With an intellect seemingly above the average, he had been bored at school and had mainly read a series of books that crossed his desk. The habit of reading multiple books followed him into adulthood. It was claimed he currently read five books per week - never fiction, always reference books, mostly about natural history and music. After his education, W had held down a few jobs but stayed at none for very long. He had a degree from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and he played many musical instruments, the violin being his favourite. He had an interesting view about the Conservatorium:

R (speaking to W): You have a (degree in) Music.
W: So. There is no money in it.
R: But that is amazing. Where did you do that?
W: In the Crematorium of Music. They call it the Crematorium of Music because they burn good music up.
R: What is your instrument?
W: What have you got?

(First recorded meeting 14 July, 2014, p. 3)

Even when he lived rough in Brooklyn, before moving in with B, his instruments followed him, except when they were hocked for money. W had lived in Brooklyn for a few decades. He stated he had sailed into the mouth of the Hawkesbury River on his small yacht, a vessel that remained moored on the River, close to where B kept her small motorboat they called her 'tinny'. W owned a boat licence and occasionally took his yacht out sailing. He had had a number of relationships in the years gone by and had been married once. A son had resulted from the marriage. This young man lived in Brisbane, and had not seen his father for 13 years at the time the research commenced.

As has already been mentioned, from the many pieces of information he imparted about himself, he did not seem to have much, if any, respect for authority or well-established institutions. He would often refer to the Police or Rural Fire Service personnel in less than glowing terms. He acted as if these people were subordinate to him, and that they reacted to his 'commands' because he knew better than them.

4.5.1. B and W as a couple

W appeared to be very protective of B. Whilst B is the main focus of my study, W and his story are an integral part of B's life, and aspects of her husband's lived experience are woven into the fabric of B's story at appropriate intervals. It became very obvious that B allowed W to assume an over-arching role in her life. When asking B a direct question, W would very often override B's ability to

answer with his own view on what was being discussed. On only a few occasions did B object to W speaking on her behalf. W continued to override B's input into the discussion even when she protested, and it was very obvious that she was displeased with his constant interjections when she was giving an opinion. As time went on, B started missing the interview sessions. It could be assumed her tolerance was tested and she found it easier to avoid W answering on her behalf. However, I needed to include the information provided by W because he illuminated the life B had led and the life she was currently living.

Both B and W were clean and tidily dressed in their homelessness – although W was unshaven with a long beard, and both had the weathered skin of people who spent much time outdoors. It was apparent that B cared greatly for her hair, that was thick and long and mostly brushed over one shoulder. She also attended to her appearance in general, with makeup used to enhance her eyes. The couple had met over the time they had both lived in Brooklyn, but became close in the months following the death of B's fiancé. This closeness led to W moving into the cave B had lived in for some time. W brought with him, into the environment he now shared with B, his treasured musical items and many, many books that would be shelved in milk crates, blue and black, and that, as has been stated, were placed in a large part of the cave that was designated as a library.

4.5.2. The depth of B

The challenges confronted when trying to pull together threads of the character traits and features of a woman who lives an unusual life, in this case residing in a cave, were all juggled when it came to B. She has an almost opaque presence, yet a charisma that is difficult to ignore when she is actually encountered (Fig 4.10). There is a perceived depth of complexity about her that is immediately obvious; to those who notice B, this perception of depth is waiting, even crying out, to be discovered. This 'invisible' versus 'charismatic' presence could be described as a contradiction.

B had lived in the homeless Brooklyn community for many years, though not consecutively, with short periods of time spent in a few other places in New South Wales and Victoria and South Australia. She was one of three homeless women in the Brooklyn area and she lived in a big cave, the largest in the headland. On a completely separate occasion, a previously homeless man had

Fig 4.10: "Over the many months I would make the journey to Brooklyn to either speak directly with B and/or W, or observe from a distance, I would very often come upon B sitting in a park alone with her dog. The sight of this fragile-looking woman sitting, usually smoking, alone in a park, was an occurrence that alerted me to question why she appeared to need these times away from W."

(Reflection, April 2016)

referred to this cave as 'Cave 13' – at some point, within the homeless community, there was a system of identifying the individual caves. This is the cave she came to share with W.

Upon meeting B, the word enigma comes immediately to mind. A very slight woman with her weathered skin, B's tiny build did not appear to be very resilient. However, this small woman had endured decades living in the toughest conditions that could be imagined. Yet another contradiction existed in relation to her stature versus her ability to survive in the face of disadvantage

and hardship.

It is important to consider her activities of daily living. B did not arise from her tent to start the day until late morning. She spent the best part of the previous night awake, occupying herself to keep away the night terrors – her past life and the disturbing death of her fiancé in Adelaide had left her stressed and anxious and with insomnia in the dead of night. W retired to their two-man tent soon after dark. He rose quite early. He knew he would not see his wife for some hours. When the death of her fiancé had just happened (this man had died alone in Adelaide when B had returned to Sydney for a period of time), and B was left alone with memories and an unfulfilled future, she resorted to howling like a wolf near her cave home. Local residents had commented on the noise. They were aware it was coming from a grieving and frustrated woman. The immediate past nurse manager (JA) of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre described B as follows:

> *B was extremely distraught and inconsolable. She would stay up until all hours of the morning and be heard wailing like a wild animal. This occurred night after night after night. Other homeless people plus residents in the village heard her. She settled somewhat when she met and lived with W. However, she never lost her dislike of the night and to this day she stays up most of the night and sleeps into the daylight hours.*
>
> (Interview 2 October, 2015)

Both B and W had a daily routine that appeared not to change very much over the week, or any week for that matter. It did not appear different on any day of the week either. When B finally rose from her bed – that she shared not only with W, but also with Lilly, their three-year old Jack Chi dog – she dressed and made her way down from the headland to the Brooklyn Community Health Centre (for a shower), or to where she knew W would be sitting. Once W ventured out of their 'camp' he usually went down to Lower McKell Park where he would spend the day. He took his books, his cigarettes, a treasured silver cigarette lighter, his radio and his alcohol. He often had a newspaper. It was

not unusual for B to bring W more alcohol and some food later in the day. At times he, himself, would walk around to a general store to buy lunch, for example, a meat pie.

Fig 4.11: The main northern railway line showing a back exit from the station leading to an old, unstable jetty used by homeless boat-dwellers to get to the mainland.

On occasions B would travel from the railway station (Fig 4.11) by train to either Woy Woy (approximately 39 kilometres to the north of Brooklyn) or Hornsby (approximately 30 kilometres south of Brooklyn) to go shopping. She purchased clothing and food supplies. On one trip she bought mince to cook up for their dinner and place on toast. B usually had a large black backpack with her that she used for the alcohol and her shopping. She had diabetes (Type One, acquired following a viral infection in her adult life) and so her cooking was planned to accommodate that. She gave herself up to six insulin injections each day. B could occasionally be seen in stores like Kmart where she did not stand out as a homeless woman living in a cave. If it were not known that she lived in a cave, no one would be any wiser because she looked like any other shopper going about their business.

B had a childhood that was very painful, so painful that she said very little about it. W engaged in conversation, that on most occasions overtook B about her

childhood. In relation to B's early life W said:

> *"Tell her about your early life (referring to B after she was asked a question about her early life). It will give you nightmares. I have to deal with it every night. She has had the worst life of any woman I have known."*
>
> (First recorded meeting 14 July, 2014, p. 1)

The only comment B made about her upbringing, not then, but at a later interview, was:

> *R: …what about your early upbringing…you said it wasn't great, B?*
> *B: No. We lived out at (inaudible)...about 400 people…no transport…cold, miserable, wet, starving…and then we moved to Quakers Hill for a while.*
> *B: We lived in a one-bedroom house there. In a paddock. Up this dirt road.*
> *R: Were you happy? Everybody has their ups and downs…in childhood, I reckon. Would you say you had a happy childhood?*
> *B: No. No, I wouldn't say I had a happy childhood. (LAUGHS)*
> *R: You mightn't want to talk about it…that's entirely up to you.*
> *B: I suffered a lot in childhood.*
> *R: Were you…as a teenager…were you happy then?*
> *B: I didn't go out as a teenager until I was 19.*
>
> (Third recorded meeting 25 August, 2014, pp. 11-12)

B's early life, and information about her parents and siblings, has already been described. In an informal conversation B admitted to another very painful occasion – she had had to have all her teeth removed by the age of eighteen because of abject neglect in dental hygiene. All her siblings had similar dental experiences, with false teeth as the result. B left school at fifteen years of age and went to work at a glove-making factory in Ballarat (in the southern State of Victoria). She machine-stitched gloves and desert boots. As she said, the first time she had gone out on a social occasion was at the age of nineteen. It is unclear how many years she stayed in Ballarat (this was where her family was based after being in New South Wales in Quakers Hill). From Ballarat she said she moved to the north coast of New South Wales and lived in a unit at Evans Head. One of her sisters (AA) also moved there with her. She stated she

commenced studying herbalism. She said she always wanted to be a microbiologist.

4.5.3. B's entry into homelessness

It was whilst in Evans Head (a coastal locality in Northern New South Wales) that a unit fire forced her into homelessness. The flat she shared with AA burned to the ground. According to B, she had already been living in the bush in one of her two tents. Whilst AA lost everything except the clothes she stood up in, B had the aforesaid accommodation of sorts. AA ended up living in a tent on the beach, and B had the other tent in the bush. When telling this part of her story she did not seem to view the life-changing occurrence of the fire as anything more than a transition into another part of her life. In fact, an impression was gained that B was already 'homeless' even when she was living in a unit.

Regarding the loss of their traditional housing, B was very matter-of-fact:

> *B: I was studying herbalism because I always wanted to be a microbiologist. My flat burnt down and I lost all my books. Ended up homeless. And that's it.*
> *W: Are you going to say you didn't make a choice?*
> *B: But I was already camping out anyway.*
> *W: So you were already what they call homeless?*
> *B: Flat burnt down. Lost the lot. So stayed in my tent.*
>
> (First recorded meeting 14 July, 2014, p. 5)

W, mentioning the word 'choice' in relation to becoming homeless, was very significant. In a Journal entry (3 August, 2014) the word 'choice' and how my part in the research might be viewed, was referred to:

> …I have been down in Brooklyn for one week and have been in the field on a number of days. I have noted movement of homeless people around the village. It appears that they are less active in the morning…It

is very difficult to know if I am part of a larger theatre of their lives and that they are very interested in being 'famous' by being written about. W used the word "choose" in relation to B explaining how she really commenced her homeless life.

There is mention in homeless writing that choice may enter the decision-making of people who become homeless. When asked about life following the fire, that had resulted in gross loss of possessions and the need to live in a tent, B stated that she and AA had stayed around the Evans Head area for a few months:

R: What was AA doing up there?
B: She was mostly just camping on the beach living a good life.
(First recorded interview 14 July, 2014, pp. 5-6)

B did not appear to place very much emphasis on how difficult their lives had become once they had lost their conventional living quarters. It did not appear to worry her at all.

Apart from her siblings, she had a mother who died in 1999, and a father who died in 2013. B went back to Ballarat at the time of her father's March death and stayed three months until June. It appeared from the references made to the families of B and W that dates and recognition of important events were very significant:

R: What do you do for birthdays?
W: Same as we do for weddings. Just have a flamin' grog-on. If you look at it, that's all everyone does. It's just that we do it all day every day.
(Second recorded meeting 3 August, 2014, p. 15)

To clarify this, B did not drink any alcohol at all. Her diabetes was such that she had to be careful of her diet. The special events, when celebrated, would be a focus on food and getting together with other homeless people to celebrate whatever was the occasion. A number of people in Brooklyn mentioned to me that they had seen homeless people, in a group, having a meal together.

Although alcohol was a large part of the day for a number of homeless people, these celebrations were different to the usual day-to-day lifestyle.

There were a number of occasions when the issue of dates was raised, and a discussion was held between W and B about an upcoming anniversary or birthday. The exact date was debated on these occasions and it appeared to be very important to have the correct date and to not forget to acknowledge the occasion. I gathered from our conversations that there were numerous 'gatherings' of homeless people for 'cook-ups' on the local barbeques and celebrations of significant events.

B stated, during one of the interviews, that she had a keen interest in art (Fig 4.12). She told me that she would soon be holding art classes in the community health centre. B talked about her art ability and showed me the picture she had painted.

Fig 4.12: "In studying the picture that B had painted of a man and a woman, I could not help but think the subject matter was very significant. B had painted (in sandstone colour tones) a woman appearing to be protected by a larger and stronger man. The man was clutching the woman and holding a cloth of some sort over the two of them. It appeared that they were taking some sort of refuge under the cloth – it did not escape me that this portrait could depict what B needed in her life: someone to watch over her

and protect her."

(Reflection whilst constructing Chapter Four, April 2016)

In the early days of the research period, B was given art paper and pastels so that she might complete more artwork. This aim was not realised. Neither was the request to write a diary, and draw a one-page diagram that depicted their lives. Giving B a disposable camera was successful. W had no interest in photography, but B was immediately enthusiastic and started taking photographs. Over a period of a few months, she was provided with four disposable cameras, of which three were handed back for developing of the photographs. When the photographs were developed, a second complete set was given to B for her to keep.

During the months of the study, B exhibited various reactions to events, and numerous ways in which she accomplished the acquisition of what she needed, and how she thought she should respond to circumstances. I began to see a pattern of behaviour (the traits often contrasting in nature and in close association with each other) that assisted me to better understand how she coped in a very male-dominated homeless community, and one that was shrouded in difficult conditions – accommodation, the weather, the terrain and, not least of all, the sometimes hostile attitude of authorities and of a number of the general community.

> *On one occasion I was in a Brooklyn café with my family and was hoping that B would walk past so I could introduce her to my daughter and son-in-law. The weather was inclement and it had been raining so my expectation was that B would not venture out. She eventually did walk past the café window and I beckoned her inside. It appeared that she did not feel comfortable inside the room, and Lilly definitely was unsure (leaning on my leg!), but she (B) was very happy to meet my family and gave them a big hug. Not a split second later the café proprietor gave her a loaf of bread, and she scurried off, out of the café door, back into her world. I believed I had witnessed a number of mechanisms B could utilise to address the challenges of her day. It was at that point that I*

began to think of B in the realm of being similar to a chameleon.

(Reflection, April 2016)

During a semi-structured interview, an inquiry was made as to how they spend their time, and where they sit each day. The answer was that they mainly came to the picnic tables on the lower headland. It would have been a short distance to scale down the rock face from the cave they called their 'camp'. Whilst it is unclear why the homeless individuals did not frequent this place, W made a reference to the small hidden alcove area behind the trees in Bottom Park where there are a number of chairs:

W: No-one goes there any more…I am always down here. Haven't you noticed?
R: So nobody uses that little place anymore?
W: Not now. I congregate these idiots like flies to honey! Doesn't matter where I go…I can't get away from them. Ah!

(Second recorded interview 3 August, 2014, p. 3)

As has already been described, B would often split from W to spend time alone, either shopping or sitting in Bottom Park (Fig 4.13). It was here that she sat in her chair in the park. Their dog, Lilly, was always with her. She was asked to

Fig 4.13: B sitting alone in a chair with her dog in Bottom Park (the chairs behind the grove of trees can just be seen)

explain this, but could only say that she sat in the park because there was a chair to sit on; the following words (Second recorded interview 3 August 2014, p.3) reflect this:

> *R: So I notice there has been a single chair out in that park a couple of days…*
> *W: Her [B] sitting chair…oh, and today.*
> *B: Someone pulled it out and I just sit there.*

From field notes (31 July, 2014) it was written that: "B's lone chair is still located in Bottom Park." The reflection noted:

> *"B would often sit on a chair located in the middle of Bottom Park, Brooklyn. She was completely alone except for her dog, Lilly. She would have her backpack sitting alongside her chair. She would be curled up on the chair in foetal position and would often be rocking. She would usually be smoking a cigarette. It appeared that this was a most important time for her – she had solitude and it seemed that she' turned in' on herself with the position and the rocking. She also appeared to gain comfort from being in this position. Perhaps it was her 'time out' and a period of 'alone-ness' that gave her a feeling of safety and security?"*
>
> (Reflection, 31 July, 2014)

I came to know B as a woman of few words, but saw her actions in her daily life as providing much information about her lived experience. Combined with comments from her husband W, it was by observing her in the locality, as well as noting what was said about her by others who knew her that provided me with a rich insight into her life. Again, I was focussing on one woman as my principal participant, but I required the input of those with whom she had contact to paste together the data that would lead to an understanding of the person.

4.5.4. Lilly: a dog

The existence of an animal in the lives of B and W cannot be ignored, and must be included in a discussion about their lives. This dog was the equivalent of a child in the eyes of her owners, and assumed a very important position in the

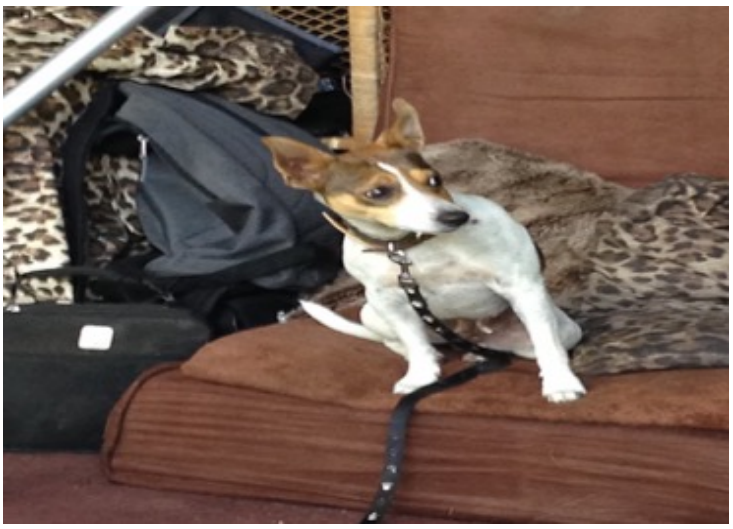


Fig 4.14: Lilly, the dog, sitting on the sofa located in the lounge room area of the cave

family unit. Lilly (Fig 4.14) was a small animal with a great deal of energy. The adjective 'wiry' would describe her body mass. She wore a collar and this had a leash attached to it. The leash was a long piece of rope but it was rarely held by B or W when they were walking her.

Lilly was approximately three years old. She was not de-sexed and had had a litter of puppies. Her colouring was in keeping with a Jack Russell and her petite frame displayed the Chihuahua part of her breed (hence 'Jack Chi'). It appeared that she was well looked after – fed and bathed regularly, and flea and tick prevention was used. In fact, it could be assumed that Lilly ate more regularly than B and W and the quality of her meals was high.

Lilly went everywhere with B and W, and if B went somewhere separate from W, Lilly always accompanied B. As I have stated, they would often be seen sitting together in one of the parks or walking along the road together.

4.6. From context to platform

The data presentation included in this chapter has provided a strong historical basis upon which to move to Chapter Five, and a closer look at relational and personal aspects of B. In the conducting of semi-structured interviews, informal discussions as well as observation, a wealth of perspectives about the lived experience has been gained. This data gives a context to the space and place, as well as the people who reside in the bushland setting and live in a cave.

Chapter Five

FINDINGS: PROVIDING A NARRATIVE PLATFORM

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts…"
William Shakespeare, As You Like It (Act II, Scene VII, 1623)

5.1. Introduction

The first part of the data presentation highlighted discussion largely centred on providing information about the site, the participants (including more understanding about B and her cohort) and associates of the participants. Following on from this, in the second part of the data presentation, there will be a focus on two major events in the life of B, and these are her marriage and the funeral of W. I again refer the reader to Appendix 4. There will also be discussion highlighting the communities in which she existed, an insight into her as a person, as well as further aspects of her lived experience. This chapter provides a context upon which further data will be woven into the reality of the lived experience of B (van Manen 1990).

5.2. Marriage vows: for better or worse

In June, after the March police barbeque, W asked B to be his wife, she accepted, and together they bought an engagement ring – gold with a cubic zircon. It appeared that the giving and receiving of a ring was a very important symbol in the life of the couple. B commented (Second recorded meeting 3 August, 2014) that the stone in the ring was "…big enough so you can see it." I was very curious about how W had orchestrated the marriage proposal; W recounted how he had asked B to marry him:

W: I just said: "Are you going to marry me?" She said: "Yeah. Ok."

(Second recorded meeting 3 August, 2014, p. 5)

B was very proud of her engagement ring and proudly showed off her new status to those with whom she had contact. There was an element of wonderment, but some people (in the Brooklyn area) cast doubt about why homeless people would marry, or even want to, given their often chaotic lives. B and W explained as follows:

Researcher: …in relation to…you guys getting married, why was getting married really important?
B: I'd never been married before.
W: I don't give a damn about that…I married her because I love her.
R: Fantastic. I just wondered. It's just a piece of paper at the end of the day.
B: And I love him.
W: That's why I was silent. This is the only contract in the country that isn't worth the paper it's written on.

(Third recorded meeting 25 August, 2014, p. 12)

JJJ who, as has been stated, knew the couple very well, and who was also a strong advocate for B and W, described the decision of B and W to marry by saying (from Journal excerpts 2 May, 2014) they did so to be 'normal'. W had attended Biblical College for a period of time, and whilst he did not practise a specific religion, JJJ stated that she felt that his time at the College was in some way part of the decision to actually marry.

As the months, and then weeks, went by leading up to the wedding day 15 September 2013, it was planned that the ceremony would take place on the headland park, directly above the cave where B and W lived, this being on the eastern face of the Brooklyn peninsular. In a conversation about the organisation of the wedding (Second recorded interview 3 August 2014, p. 7), the following information was imparted:

R: And was it much fuss getting McKell Park?
W: Getting? I went to Council and I got stonewalled by this retarded sheila behind the wall. I said: "Fine"…I will do what everyone else obviously does…just do it. Well, what's gunna happen? I invited the local cops. And I invited the local Council people. What are they going to say?
R: Well, they are not going to say anything.
B: There was an anniversary the same day as our wedding.
W: Oh yeah. It was a 69th anniversary. Fair dinkum.
R: They're all guests of the wedding, though.
W: Yeah. Everyone was invited.

It was also planned, due to the longstanding relationship between local Brooklyn homeless people and the Church, that the Salvation Army would preside over the event. Because there were no official invitations sent out, only word of mouth alerted the invitees. Many who were in the park on the day were unsuspecting 'guests':

Regarding the planning of the wedding I was very curious about how permission had been granted to use Upper McKell Park given it was a Council managed area. I was informed that despite being refused permission, W had decided to go ahead with the proceedings in the Park anyway. I gained the impression that he believed they (authority figures) had no right to refuse and that they (B and W) would just go ahead and get married in the Park. W had shown himself, on a number of occasions, to be unperturbed, and even arrogant, when it came to dealing with authority organisations and individuals. He told me he had invited everyone including Council officers and Police to the wedding. I believe he felt this would cover all the bases needed to hold the ceremony without any interference.

(Reflection, April 2016)

A cross section of the local Brooklyn community was told about the wedding, as were local church people who had assisted the homeless in some way – with food or donating LED lighting for the caves. Health workers and service

providers were also told about the details of the wedding. Homeless people near and far were alerted, most likely by the use of mobile phones, as were special people in the lives of the couple. The usual wedding features of this occasion were also catered for, with volunteers providing such things as the wedding cake, music and food. All guests were asked to bring a plate of something to eat. The issue of gifts was not mentioned.

Finally, the date arrived. Brilliant sunshine foretold of a unique and special day. The wedding was going to take place in a park, on a hill, witnessed by many people from numerous walks of life. For all intents and purposes, this marriage was the same as most others. It certainly looked on the surface to be very traditional, apart from the venue being a park. There was a bride in a pure white dress, wearing a veil. There was a groom in a suit, albeit with the unlikely addition of a bum bag. There were three bridesmaids attending to the requirements of the bride. They were dressed in identical deep pink, spaghetti-strapped dresses with lighter matching shawls. The bride and her maids carried bouquets of beautiful flowers. The bride had bought her dress from an opportunity shop. It was covered in lace and pearls. B had made her veil. Her shoes had also been bought cheaply from an opportunity outlet. All of the 'whiteness' had been kept that way by being stored in a huge sealed tub in the cave. The bridesmaids had bought their dresses from a market. The three attendants to the bride included two of B's sisters and the woman who had spoken of weddings at the police barbeque. After telling everyone assembled at the picnic table back in March that she would be the first bride, it appeared that she had not married as she planned, and that the wedding of B and W was taking place before the one she stated would occur sooner.

The groom appeared to be very nervous as he waited for his bride to arrive. He paced around the park, smoking cigarettes incessantly. The suit he was wearing was light beige with the black bum bag in front. His head was covered with a woven fedora hat. He had one friend attending him – another homeless man (FFF) who lived in a boat on the Hawkesbury River. The friend, or best man, was holding a can of beer, something he did for the entirety of the service. Whilst the ceremony was underway, the best man wore the groom's fedora on

top of his cap. B and W's female dog, the Jack Chi, was a prominent member of the wedding and this animal, Lilly, had a bow attached to the collar around her neck. She was running around excitedly, going from one person to the other.

Fig 5.1: The Salvation Army officer conducting the ceremony in the marriage of B and W

There was an altar set against one of the gum trees in the park immediately in front of the couple as they said their vows (Fig 5.1). It was a beautifully dressed table complete with two tablecloths, one of lace, and there were flowers and candles. The shape of the park lent itself to the accommodation of guests, with people crowded along the sides of the clearing leading from the altar. Along these sides also were picnic tables and barbeques. A number of unwitting picnickers were witness to the nuptials, as were fishermen walking through the

park carrying their rods and tackle. A few bush turkeys completed the scene. At the opposite end of the park, where the bride would arrive, there was a low fence behind which cars were parked. One of the previously homeless elderly men who had lived rough in Brooklyn, but was now housed in a suburb nearby, named as XXX, was assigned the role of walking the bride through the middle of the assembled guests to give her away. W later reflected on the time spent with XXX, who had been gravely ill in the Brooklyn homeless community not that long before, and how they had helped him:

> *W:…Gettin' him out of here and gettin' him off the grog, got him out of the flamin' wheelchair. FFF got that push along one, remember? XXX wouldn't sit in it for 3 weeks. And soon as he sat in it, he wouldn't flamin' get out of it.*
>
> (Second recorded meeting 3 August, 2014, p. 10)

XXX had been close to death whist living in the bush in Brooklyn, and now had a walking frame to ambulate, and an important role in the wedding. He could credit his current reasonable health to the fact the people in the Brooklyn homeless community had rallied around him, attended to his needs, and ultimately persuaded him to go into rehabilitation for alcohol abuse. Interestingly, however, none of the homeless in Brooklyn had visited him in the unit he was moved to, despite the fact it was in a suburb on the train line.

Adorning a number of the picnic tables, there were the expected items of a wedding. A three-tiered cake, that had been made by the daughter of the nurse manager of the community health centre, was surrounded by a ribboned ceremonial knife, goblets for the wedding toasts, cards and some gifts, and food ready for consumption by the guests. W also later reflected on the wedding reception and the food and the alcohol:

> *W: Well it was alright. It was on the day of the wedding. I went down there [?General Store]. She had already spent $1000 on tucker. Right ok. So I blew $1000 on grog.*
>
> (Second recorded interview 3 August, 2014, p. 10)

He commented on the planning for the wedding by stating that it was ‘simple’ to arrange, and that it had ‘just happened’. B had a more realistic commentary and stated (Second recorded interview 3 August 2014, p. 7) that the planning had been undertaken over months and that staff and others had assisted:

> *R: When you said yes, how did you decide what to do? Because it was beautiful.*
> *W: It just happened. Simple. Salvation Army…*
> *B: Staff and everything…Worked for months…the dress and the last minute…*
> *W: Bought me bloody suit…she didn’t like the tie.*
> *B: AA got the bridesmaids’ dresses at Paddy’s Market at the last minute. I wasn’t even going to have bridesmaids.*

The attitude from W was an interesting comment about the planning and preparation for the wedding. As any person who has been involved in arranging a wedding would know, there is a great deal to do to ensure the smooth running of the day. W had obviously not been involved in many (if not most) of the tasks needed to be undertaken to ensure everything was organised for their marriage ceremony.

The ‘reception’ went on for a number of days. There was a great deal of food and alcohol stored somewhere that was not placed out for the guests. Later, when this food and, in particular, the alcohol was produced, the mainly homeless friends of the couple remained in the area until the alcohol was completely consumed. W and B had stayed in the village centre, courtesy of the generosity of the local motel owner. They were given accommodation for the night preceding the wedding and the wedding night. The days after that were spent with their homeless peers in the Upper McKell Park area, mainly drinking and celebrating the nuptials. As far as I could ascertain, there was no toast at the ceremony (despite there being wine goblets on the table near the cake). There was no official cutting of the cake; I was later informed that the cake was largely eaten by possums. It appeared that once the alcohol was drunk (mostly by the homeless community) the homeless friends left the site and returned to their own environment, wherever that was.

5.3. A funeral: til death us do part

The circumstances surrounding W's death and funeral have already been mentioned and will be enlarged upon throughout this section of narrative. W died 19 June 2015. He had been unwell for a few months prior to his death with abdominal symptoms and swollen legs, leading to more serious illness in his final few weeks. W had spent the majority of the past number of decades drinking alcohol all day, every day. In the end, he succumbed to the effects of this intake of alcohol as well as an undiagnosed abdominal complaint. In retrospect, when reflecting upon W's last months, he appeared to have lost weight in his arms and face, but his abdomen remained bloated.

A small snapshot of an occasion that showed B to be concerned about W's swollen legs (despite the fact she had brought him alcohol plus ingredients to make a drink) follows:

> *B has brought W a number of items to mix as a drink – soda water, vodka and lemon juice. W proceeds to mix his vodka drink.*
> *B: He has got swollen legs.*
> *W: I've got water retention.*
> *R: So, have you been to the doctor about that?*
> *W: Not yet. There's not much point going…they give you some diuretics.*
> *R: Then you're weeing all day.*
> *W: I'm doing that anyhow.*
> *R: Ok.*
> *W: I'm actually drinking coffee.*
> *R: For the diuretic effect?*
> *W: Yes.*
> *R: Probably wouldn't be a bad idea to go to the doctor.*
>
> (Third recorded meeting 25 August, 2014, p. 2)

This period of ill-health had resulted in two admissions into hospital. A planned endoscopy preceding the first admission was not performed because of W's inability to adequately prepare for the test. The strict ingestion of a large

amount of liquid, and the subsequent need to have a toilet close by, was the main disincentive because W would have had to climb steep rocks to access a toilet (in the dark). The advocate (JJJ) lobbied numerous times (to no avail) to have W admitted into hospital the night before the endoscopy, so that the essential preparation could be undertaken in this environment. The hospital expressed surprise when W did not attend his appointment, much to the immense frustration of the advocate. Another disincentive is likely to have been his lack of desire to find out what exactly was the problem with his gut.

The admissions to hospital were also an insightful reflection of attitudes towards homeless people. The first admission was short with a concerted attempt to discharge W before a long weekend. B had little medical knowledge and agreed to take him 'home' to the cave. According to JJJ, (Interview 23 July, 2015) the admission into Accident and Emergency resulted in a six-hour stay before medical personnel attended to him. B sat powerless beside his bed and it was not until the advocate (JJJ) visited that W's serious condition was examined, and B was acknowledged as his wife and next-of-kin. An explanation to the advocate for why W had not been seen by staff was that he had the 'DTs' (delirium tremens) due to alcohol intake. The advocate was forced to argue with the Accident and Emergency staff about W's condition and the urgent need to have him examined as soon as possible. Given the then current rule for New South Wales Accident and Emergency Departments – that each patient should be seen and treated/transferred/discharged within a four-hour period – a more than six-hour stay with no examination was not a policy outcome that was acceptable. Yet, this had happened to W because of a dislike of how he smelled, and an assumption about his condition.

From the perspective of the research there was a finality in W's passing, the conduct of his funeral and then observing B in the post-funeral days; many of the key themes came together, and these will be highlighted and discussed as the narrative of B's lived experience continues to unfold leading to the conclusion of the study.

When W became progressively more unwell, B was concerned. She had

several conversations with their advocate (JJJ) and received advice about what to do to assist him. For a period of time he continued to live in the cave, and his homeless friends assisted B with the day-to-day challenges he faced. One of these was mobility and W required carrying to ascend to the top park or descend to the lower park. The discarded wheelchair that had been used for XXX and that had been parked nearby B and W's cave, was once again put into service for ease of W moving around the cave area. A few weeks later B arranged for W, who was in a very poor condition, to be transferred again to hospital.

In his two hospitalisations she stayed faithfully with him throughout. As has been stated, it remains unclear the exact nature of his diagnosis. B sat beside his bed in Accident and Emergency and, according to the advocate, showed remarkable stoicism and bravery in the face of an ever-worsening illness. When W died, she was visibly affected by the loss of her husband. B was able to return to the cave (after an initial few days with her sister in Ryde) to spend a period alone following his death, and at the time of the funeral.

As has been previously noted, B had an earlier relationship where her then fiancée died as a result of a fire in a tent in Adelaide. Initially the thought of W being burnt in a cremation was abhorrent to B (according to JJJ). However, she soon came to realise that the two deaths were completely different, and she changed her mind from a burial for W to a cremation.

The advocate summarised B's initial feelings about W's death with the following conversation (the advocate had expected B would 'drop her bundle' but this did not happen; the advocate was surprised):

> *JJJ: …[I expected] she [B] would deteriorate, but she hasn't.*
> *R: Yes. [showing similar surprise]*
> *JJJ: I actually think it's been good she stayed in the cave. I think it has helped her that she has stayed in the community because she has got everyone that is familiar and everybody looking out for her. I think that has helped her not go down the depression stage yet.*

R: So she stayed in the cave? She didn't go over with [her sister]?
JJJ: She stayed with [her sister] for a couple of nights, and then came back…didn't want to be there.
R: Ok. Was that initially, or after the funeral?
JJJ: I think it was just before the funeral she went and stayed with [her sister]. She wanted to stay a few nights in the cave because she said to me she wanted to be there when his ghost came back.
R: Ok.
JJJ: I said "right". And when she was telling me this there was this amazing rainbow that was right in front of us hitting the water and I said I don't think he will be a ghost, I think that he is telling you he is okay.
R: Was she happy with that?
JJJ: Yeah, yeah. She cried and then she laughed and then she said: "I think you might be right." I said: "So don't be afraid to go to [your sister], you are not going to miss him; he is in your heart now." So she went and stayed a few nights. But then I think she just thought that she wanted to go back home.
R: It's not home [the sister's unit] to her.

(Interview 23 July, 2015)

It was, however, farewell to life as B had known it.

Ten days after W died a morning funeral was arranged to be held at Rookwood Necropolis in Sydney. A few days before the funeral the burial was changed to a cremation, to be held in the Memorial Gardens Crematorium. The service would be a 'pauper's funeral'. New South Wales (and other jurisdictions) have funding available for provision of funeral services when a person cannot afford one. The words 'pauper' or 'destitute' are used to describe this type of funeral. Because I had been in close contact with B and W, and had witnessed their wedding and their life together as a married couple in the cave, I was really determined to attend. I set out very early on the Monday morning, anxious not to be late. I arrived one and a half hours early. This allowed me to have a look around the Rookwood area and locate the Crematorium (I reflected on what W had said about the Conservatorium of Music). Finding a restaurant business

within the grounds, I decided to have a coffee and this was opportune because I was sitting down at a table a few chairs from an elderly gentleman, who looked like a minister, but was wearing Rotary badges on his suit lapel (including a Paul Harris Fellow – the highest award in Rotary). I soon discovered that he was to be the presiding minister for W's funeral. From previous experience, I knew that Rotarians eventually could take the title of 'Retired' and that a number of Church ministers had done so. I concluded that this man was one such 'Retired' category, and that he had most likely been asked to conduct the funeral. He did not know B or W.

At the chapel in the Crematorium people started to arrive – many people. B looked sad but lovely, surrounded by two of her sisters and wearing a (borrowed) dark blue long winter wool coat. She appeared to have lost weight but her hair and face were beautiful. She gave the impression of being lost – drowning in the over-sized coat, people close to her swarming around making her look frail and powerless. Many attendees walked up to her to say a few words. A funeral car was parked outside the door of the chapel; W's casket had already been taken inside. Everyone was ushered into the chapel.

Together in that room of solitude sat people from various backgrounds. B's direct family consisted only of her sisters – the two sisters who had been her bridesmaids; a third sister still in Ballarat was not present, and her brother was not present. W's only known child (a son), from Brisbane, who had not seen his father since the year 2000 (and so had not attended the wedding), sat a long way back in the pews; he was not sitting anywhere near B. A number of family members from W's side attended, however, these people W's son had not previously met. There were Salvation Army personnel, and representatives from other churches in the area who had known W and B through food provision or gifts such as LED lighting and the like. There were local community people and representatives from the Brooklyn Community Health Centre. There were some unidentified people, who may have been homeless, but W's Best Man FFF did not attend. JJJ later recounted that homeless people rarely attend funerals despite the fact they are confronted with death regularly – deaths as a result of alcohol and other drug abuse, violence, accidents, malnourishment and

even, on occasions, suicide.

The minister was a kindly and reverent man who had taken a great deal of trouble to find out information about W's life. JJJ had ensured this happened because she wanted W's funeral to be personal, and not like most pauper's services. JJJ's efforts in regard to this were most likely for B as well – to have a beautiful service would assist B to cope with another huge loss. B must have gained a great deal of comfort from the words of the minister. Two people made eulogies – W's son and JJJ. The son only said a few words, and it was clear he did not really know his father very well, having lived most of his young years with his paternal grandmother. JJJ spoke words indicating a great knowledge of W and his life, and in particular the fourteen years she had organised and attended the Brooklyn park evening meal cook-up. The speeches were a contrast but both spoke volumes about W's life. I managed to learn more about the man that I had interviewed over the months of my data collection.

At the conclusion of the service, with the casket lying perpendicular to the assembled congregation, and covered with a huge spray of Australian flowers, and just about to be transferred for the cremation to take place, B decided to walk up and place a silver cigarette lighter on the coffin. This cigarette lighter held great meaning for B – W had used it every day of his life with her.

Later I became aware that there had been a great deal of pressure from members of the local Brooklyn homeless community to place W's treasured violin into the coffin with him. It was said that FFF had become very upset that B would not include the violin with W's body. B explained that she wanted to give the violin to W's son. In a display of strength B's decision was finally enacted.

At the conclusion of the funeral service a song by Bob Dylan was played. The selection of this song was poignant, and also very meaningful in relation to the life of W. I feel it is appropriate that the words are included in this section.

He Was a Friend of Mine (Bob Dylan, 1991, writer unknown)

He was a friend of mine
He was a friend of mine
Every time I think about him now
Lord I just can't keep from cryin'
'Cause he was a friend of mine

He died on the road
He died on the road
He never had enough money
To pay his room or board
And he was a friend of mine

I stole away and cried
I stole away and cried
'Cause I never had too much money
And I never been quite satisfied
And he was a friend of mine

He never done no wrong
He never done no wrong
A thousand miles from home
And he never harmed no one
And he was a friend of mine

He was a friend of mine
He was a friend of mine
Every time I hear his name
Lord I just can't keep from cryin'
'Cause he was a friend of mine.

A number of songs were played at the service, but it is this song that impacted most on me. Reading the words, they appear to aptly encapsulate some of the

life that W must have lived. They make certain observations about the man W had been in his living years.

5.4. Narrative revelations

At this point I need to enlarge on the interviews I conducted with the local historian (TR), the immediate past nurse manager at the Brooklyn Community Health Centre (JA), and the advocate (JJJ). These revelations will more fully depict and describe (particularly with the advocate, JJJ) the events that occurred surrounding the illness of W, his medical care, and his subsequent passing. The aim of conversations surrounding specifically homelessness was that the discussions be undertaken in general terms.

TR is a wealth of knowledge about Brooklyn from very many aspects, not only its rich history. Our meeting 12 January 2015 produced a number of interesting and relevant pieces of information about the area and its residents. With regard to the itinerant nature of early inhabitants he restated that there were many waves of occupation and development of the Brooklyn area, these including people who were homeless. I had already noted that the existing homeless community in Brooklyn selected who was permitted to become part of their community. Not everyone who arrived in Brooklyn, and wanted to be part of the community, was able to join the homeless group. They were actively moved on by the homeless community members. TR commented on this:

> *TR: That used to be the Police method too. The Police used to, when the station was open down there, they would pick them up, and then they would take them across to the station and buy them a ticket to anywhere.*

The discussion focussed on alcohol consumption:

> *TR: From that point of view too (alcohol can be easily bought from the general store), it is a bit of an affront to the tourism industry. You come down to beautiful Brooklyn and there are a couple of homeless people in*

the park. Some of those are lovely…you know, they are lovely people.
R: Yes. That is true.
TR: And I guess the problem that we are looking at is whether we as a society, in this day and age, should be doing something more significant, to prevent that type of homeless situation.

TR acknowledged (as a retired teacher/principal) that severe trauma in childhood can have devastating effects. The discussion then covered what could be done:

TR: I wonder whether there are answers.
R: You know what my thinking is? In some cases there is no answer. They are never going to want to be anywhere else, or be living another way of life. They want to be the way they are. And a lot of that is related to Acquired Brain Injury. Even though there are people who say: "No, who would choose to live like that?" But I am afraid some people do.
TR: And you know, the problem is really, adjusting that sort of living to the rest of us in society.

The remainder of the meeting again considered the history of the Brooklyn area where tent dwellers included the bridge builders, oyster farmers, fishermen, early settlers and people working in the lime industry.

The meeting with the retired nurse manager, which was undertaken 2 October 2015, was also revealing. JA had worked closely with members of the homeless community. Apart from what has already been stated as JA's role in the Brooklyn Community Health Centre, she would also drive homeless individuals to appointments and any commitments that they had. JA stated:

JA: Mental health issues are a huge concern when dealing with the homeless.

JA spoke generally about the lure of Brooklyn for homeless people in that the area is isolated, and an individual could easily seek solitude in the bushland.

Apart from health care provision, there was a need to provide services and support from a number of government entities. She stated:

> *JA: We need Police (and mostly we have them) who understand the homeless issue and connect with people, gaining (their) trust.*

The meeting with the advocate, JJJ, was long and involved and held 23 July 2015. This was a little over one month after W died. There was detailed information provided from JJJ regarding homelessness and B. It is important to the understanding of B, and her lived experience, to recount some of the situations which involved W. JJJ had a view on pauper funerals (where she had read a eulogy):

> *JJJ: They are impersonal, because there is no-one to speak for the person so it is really just the formalities.*

JJJ was determined that W would have a funeral that was meaningful and reflected his life. The Minister who officiated did not know W but was happy to receive information about W to assist him to conduct the service:

> *JJJ: …before the funeral I got a call from him and I said I want you to know this man had faith; he might have lived in a very alternate way but he had faith and I really would like that to be acknowledged in the service you are going to give. He said: "Yes, of course. This is wonderful. I never get asked to do this for destitute funerals."*

Following the funeral, the Minister told JJJ:

> *"That was one of the nicest services I have done. Thank you so much for all that information. He (the minister) said you made him (W) a man, you made him a person. What an amazing chap…"*

Regarding W's first hospitalisation (shortly before he died – he had another hospitalisation a few weeks later), JJJ was alarmed about the attitude of the

Accident and Emergency staff, who did not go near him for most of the time he was there. B was sitting with W, and despite the fact they had been in the department over five hours, little attention was paid to them until JJJ arrived after work. JJJ raised the incident with the researcher, being very alarmed and concerned about it. This is what happened after JJJ asked to see him in Accident and Emergency, to the surprise of a staff member:

> *R: …surprised that you would be asking about him?*
> *JJJ: Yes. And she said: "It is really smelly up there." And I said: "That's fine." She said: "Oh, oh." The look on her face was like: "What would you be wanting to do going up there and see him?" She said: "He's a bit of a mess." And I said: "That's okay; I don't mind." She said: "Come through and I will take you up there." Then she said: "He's got some woman there with him." And I said: "Well, that would be his wife." And she said: "HIS WIFE?!" And I said: "Yes, his wife."*

JJJ then asked for a medical assessment of W:

> *JJJ: This man's been here for hours and he hasn't even been assessed yet. He is really unwell. "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, we'll get to him…he's just drying out from alcohol." I said: "No it's not. Have you not bothered to read any information that (was) sent with him in the ambulance? (Staff) organised a whole lot of information." "Oh, oh. Is there more to it?" "Yes, there's more to it."*
> *JJJ: I think that they had looked at him – 1) Judged him to be a homeless person, and 2) Had seen in his brief health summary he was an alcoholic and had alcohol addiction issues, and straight away just wrote it off as, oh well, he's got symptoms of confusion, he's detoxed, he hasn't drunk for 10 days, you know, that's what this is. We will just leave him there.*

Eventually a doctor attended W:

> *JJJ: And you could tell she was just looking thinking: "Oh God, how did I land this case?"*

The doctor queried that he had missed his recent colonoscopy appointment:

> *JJJ: "YES! He is homeless! How was he meant to prep?" "Oh, oh, oh, ok." So after a little while she took it a bit more seriously, than just writing alcohol withdrawal. So from there she said: "I think we will…" I said: "I'm not leaving until you tell me you are going to admit him." So she said: "Oh, I don't know if we are." I said: "You cannot send him home. He lives in a cave. Do you understand what I am telling you? You cannot send him home. He has no idea what is going on. And he lives in a cave." I said: "It will be against your duty of care if you discharge him this evening." And she said: "Oh. I need to get someone to take him on to admit him." So I said: "You need to do that." So she went away. She came back and she said: "We are admitting him."*

The time was then 9pm.

A few days later B sent JJJ a text:

> *B: "They're discharging W, but they want me to put him in a nursing home."*
> *R: WHAT??!!*
> *JJJ: "Why would they be sending him home on the Friday (before a long weekend)?"*

He had improved slightly, but still was not well.

> *JJJ: …he was with a bunch of really old people. And he was sort of looking out for them as well. Which was really sweet. He was telling me about all of them and what was going on. And then he would sort of zone out for a bit and then come back to it again. Sort of talk to himself a bit. You know W…*

So W was discharged into the care of B (who did not appear to have actually

grasped the very serious nature of W's illness herself – she referred to W as having a cold). He could hardly walk. He remained very unwell. JJJ visited on Sunday at Brooklyn. B said:

> *B: "He can't make it down to the cave anymore so we have had to set up a tent in the park."*
> *JJJ: And I just didn't say anything to them but I thought: "What is the hospital doing discharging this man??? If he can't walk, you know, three metres, why???"*

W had B to look after him, plus one of her sisters, as well as two other homeless men who lived in the area (one of whom had been W's Best Man - FFF). Concurrently, and just before W became gravely ill, Hornsby Shire Council had expressed an intention to reclaim the cave area so that the inhabitants would need to move on. FFF blamed this announcement on W's ill-health. W died within weeks of this scenario.

JJJ provided another insight into the lives of homeless people:

> *JJJ: A number of years ago…(a homeless man died), he fell off the cliff in the middle of the night. They (the Brooklyn homeless people) were all really distraught about it so I took them (W and three or four others)…to the funeral. Plus, some Salvo people helped with cars. And I was really surprised that they wanted to go. And when I turned up there to pick them up, they are standing there with a bunch of native flowers. And I said: "What are you doing with those?" "Well, he needs something on his coffin." And I said: "Well, that's illegal to do that." And they said: "No-one's going to know. Who is going to think a bunch of bums have done something like this? Open your boot JJJ, we are putting them in your boot."*
> *JJJ: …it wasn't a destitute funeral because he had family with means. But, those boys, and I will call them boys, carried the coffin in and I was in tears seeing the humility that was upon them. They had their stolen flowers over the coffin. And they carried that in. That is the only time*

any of them have gone to a funeral.

As has been already stated, only B and two of her sisters attended the funeral of W. No-one else from the Brooklyn homeless community was there.

5.5. Community connections: homeless, general, trusted

There are three distinct communities with which B appeared to interact: homeless, trusted and general. The homeless community was the group of people who, like the couple, lived in a cave (Fig 5.2), a boat or some sort of 'camp' either close to the village or the caves, or deeper in the bushland. These people communicated with each other as a separate part of the Brooklyn population, and it appeared that there was a hierarchy within the community where some members were more prominent than others. I initially believed that W was the 'person-in-charge' but came to realise that the dominant man was one who lived on a boat in the waters close to the railway station. When listening to W talk this was not obvious, but seeing both together, it was clear who was in charge.

B and W describe aspects of their homeless life:

> *R: When did you both come here (meaning Brooklyn)? Where did you meet?*
> *W and B: Here. Down in Bottom Park (opposite the railway station).*
> *W: I came here in 1996. I sailed through the Heads. Took one look at the Marina. And went: "The Bottlo opens at 7 o'clock", and said: "Why am I going to Cairns?"*
>
> (First recorded interview 14 July, 2014, pp. 6-7)

Fig 5.2: View of a cave (most likely that occupied by B's sister AA) from the lower park area (photograph courtesy of B)

When asked how they chose their cave, the response was that that B had been told about the cave by another homeless woman. Despite there being a number of obvious disadvantages to living in a semi-exposed accommodation, such as weather, the size of the cave was very agreeable to both B and W (First recorded interview 14 July, 2014, p. 8):

> *R: How did you choose the particular cave you now call home? How did you know what was here?*
> *B: (A homeless woman) told me.*
> *R: It is a very good space.*
> *R: Does the wind ever blow into the cave?*
> *W: It would have to be a screamin' 'sou-easter'.*
> *W: That is why we have the tent. Same as our cave-dwelling ancestors. Find a big cave and put a tent up in it.*
> *R: Do you light a fire up there (in your cave)?*
> *B: Metho burner.*
> *W: And we have a little gas heater just in case. That works well.*
> *B: And we have a little BBQ so it doesn't mess up the environment.*

The trusted community was smaller than the homeless community, and consisted of people who had created a solid relationship with certain members of the homeless group; there were a few homeless people in this 'trusted' group as well as certain 'outside' individuals, for example the advocate (JJJ) who had started off the 'cook up' in McKell Park (a weekly evening barbeque where the homeless people who attend are provided with soup, cooked food and other items such as clothing and books). The trusted community was an extremely important and valued part of the relationships experienced by the homeless people living in Brooklyn. For B, her husband was included in the trusted community. So was, as far as I could estimate, JA, the immediate past nurse manager of the Health Centre. The advocate (JJJ), who greatly assisted B with the wedding preparations, was a pinnacle member of this group because she had known, and helped, the couple through many life experiences, as can be seen from the following words (Second recorded interview 3 August, 2014, p. 11):

> *R: And what about the Salvation Army officiating person, and obviously JJJ, who is lovely, gorgeous, because you got to know them just from coming up [to Brooklyn]? Is that why you asked [the Salvation Army Church to marry you]?*
> *W: JJJ and [her husband], started that (the...cook up on Thursdays]…last century. It has been going ever since. So that's how we know them. Like 'blah, blah, blah' – we'll do it says JJJ. Ok Right. We got the flamin' celebrant. Now all we got to do is get the tucker and grog. (LAUGHS) It just fell together.*

JJJ was very valued by B and W, and she provided immense and irreplaceable support to enable the wedding to take place, as well as during the period of time W was gravely ill and died. It appeared that B would contact JJJ, above any other person, should advice be required.

Being part of the trusted community, JJJ offered a great deal of insight into homeless people in general, their actions and their feelings. JJJ stated that her priority areas for homelessness (From Journal Excerpts 2 May, 2014) were:

mental health, addictions, new releases [from jail], then…HOUSING. JJJ also highlighted what she believed to be important aspects of communication with homeless people, and this is recorded as follows:

> *[JJJ] spoke of TOUCH as an important aspect of interaction: "NO-ONE TOUCHES US". She gives hugs. Re [FFF] – he gives impression of unpredictability and even danger – BUT she saw 2 occasions where more insight [was had]: 1. A man suicided in the Upper McKell Park toilet block and [FFF] would not let [JJJ] deal with it, and 2. He was drunk and disagreeing [with]/bullying another homeless person when [JJJ] intervened. He swung around and punched her. The other homeless people [in attendance] pulled him off. [FFF] was very sorry for this action. She also said there was a fear of being institutionalised.*
>
> (From Journal Excerpts 2 May, 2014)

Then there was the general community which, for the local homeless group, was the majority of the Brooklyn village. It appeared that some in the general community were oblivious to the presence of homeless people living in the area, some were supportive of the community, and others were diametrically opposed to homeless people living in, and walking around, the village precincts. Over time, there had been complaints about some homeless activities, from certain people in the general community, to Police and Hornsby Council staff. The homeless person's connection to the general community was largely for the necessities of life that could be obtained nowhere else, for example, purchase of mobile phones, alcohol, food; there was also the need for welfare access and other services. In a discussion with a local resident the following reflection was recorded:

> *"The village of Brooklyn was divided about the existence of homeless people in the caves and within bushland. One resident had stated it was not unusual to hear blame for an unsavoury event attributed to a homeless person. This resident was sceptical about the truth in some of the comments, that he felt were made up to place the homeless population in a poor light. One of the circumstances centred around*

excess rubbish in some areas of the village. Later, it was acknowledged that the high numbers of bush turkeys led to rubbish being scattered as well as becoming part of their mounds."

(Reflection, April 2016)

It is interesting to reflect that the bush turkeys appeared to have more rights than the human beings making up the homeless community.

5.5.1. Liminality

B appeared to have a unique 'frame of mind', or part of her persona, that was separate again to the three communities in which she lived. This could be described as a liminal area. I have given examples of B's lone behaviours and activities, but one example was truly insightful. The following incident was totally unexpected and occurred 20 March 2015:

> 3.30pm. Walked to see B and W (along Dangar Road, past JDs restaurant and the marina). This was a planned meeting with B and W. I had sms'd W to say I was running late. No reply. I walked east along the shore of the Hawkesbury River toward the point in Lower McKell Park. I then noticed B and Lilly walking immediately in front of me but not so close that I could catch her or that she would see me. B had her backpack on and is pulling a small black suitcase (??full of supplies or alcohol??). What happened then is as follows:- "I made another date/time to meet with B and W today at Lower McKell Park at 3.30pm. Same confirmed. I was running late (about 15 minutes) but as fate would have it, I was walking behind B (and dog) towards the point. B was walking on a path near the water's edge. I was in the car park. She 'disappeared' despite the fact I was supposed to be meeting the two of them. I doubled back along the path and there she was, sitting curled up on a seat, eating an apple and ROCKING back and forward. I spoke to her. She immediately stopped rocking and uncurled herself. She looked shocked (?embarrassed). A storm had just – rain, thunder, lightning – so

I gave her the book I had for W, asked her about the camera (answer: it was in the cave), asked her to apologise for me to W, that due to the storm I would not stay. I asked her about her trips to Woy Woy (to fill a conversation void) – she had been shopping and not met anyone. I quickly left."

REFLECTION: This was a very confronting situation. I felt I had 'invaded' an extremely personal occasion in B's life. It was almost as if I had come upon her when she was at her most vulnerable. She obviously did not expect I would see her, and especially not in the foetal position. She must have realised that I was meeting with the two of them, and may very well have been embarrassed that she had wantonly avoided this meeting. The state in which I found her was a most vulnerable and fragile one. It was as if she used the foetal position and the rocking to protect herself, to provide her with a safety that was not open to her in her life with W, and with other homeless and non-homeless people. This was a significant revelation, and a milestone in my path to the understanding of B as a human being.

5.6. Being homeless/being houseless

The journey through the research process can be seen to be filled with challenges and unexpected events. A very close relationship developed between the researcher and the participants that enabled frank and open discussions about life in the caves of Brooklyn.

Conversations with B and W over the months of the research were sometimes confined to a difference of opinion between them, and not always reflective of their lived experience. Sometimes there was a reference to homelessness:

B: It's amazing. When you're homeless, and live out in the forest.
W: Who's homeless?
B: The animals just accept you as a part of them…
R: Just in terms of 'your area is their area' too?

B: Yes.
R: Do you reckon that's why they are so game in coming into your camp?
B: Yes.
R: And the snake will come in and live…and the possum...
B: The blue tongue will sleep under my tent of a night, and go in the morning.
W: An occasional flamin' goanna will wander through and go…(mimics goanna noise)…
R: Do you see big ones? Big goannas?
W: Yes. Ahh. Was it Thomas? Yes Thomas. Eight foot. And Harold was his baby.

(Third recorded meeting 25 August, 2014, pp. 3-4)

In keeping with inquiries about the homeless community, it was pertinent to ask how the hierarchy within it (and there was an obvious 'pecking order') reacted when new people arrived in Brooklyn and wanted to join the others:

R: When new people arrive here, do they stay?
W: We have to adopt them.
B: It depends.
R: You have to be safe. You have to look after your own community.
B: We don't like people shootin' up here.

(Third recorded meeting 25 August, 2014, p. 7)

B and W provided further reference to new people, as well as the perception from the general community of homeless people overall, with a statement that they, the homeless, will get the blame for anything that happens to tourists in the area. B and W stressed that they did not 'accept' anyone who was taking or injecting drugs. I observed the decision to reject a man (pulling his suitcase) who had just arrived into Brooklyn via the train. The conversation I heard was strongly of the view that the man would not be accepted into their community. The following conversation (Third recorded interview 25 August, 2014, pp. 8-9) clearly illustrates the manner in which the homeless community arranged its structure:

B: When they come from Sydney and they are real bad bastards, we get rid of

them.
R: Fair enough too. You don't want to have…that's dangerous to you guys too. Apart from anything, you could stand on the needles, or anything.
W: That's the point. Not only that, see if anything happens to the tourists there, we get the bloody blame.
R: That's it.
W: I've never shoved a needle in my arm in my fuckin' life. As soon as someone treads on a needle, I'll be the junkie.
R: That's bad.
W: She is (referring to B) terrible. She is always sticking needles in herself.
B: I'm diabetic though.
R: That's a little bit different though…
B: We don't like violent types that punch up people and stuff like that. We get rid of them.
R: Do you get those people coming…you look at this place…if you were coming here on the train, would you stop here? You would stop here…it's beautiful. Yeah, you would stop here.
R: So do you get quite a few coming off the station? Yeah.
R: That guy that was on the chair the last time I came? What happened to him? He just moved on did he?
B: Yeah. Not many of them stay because it's hard living here.
W: No, it's not.
B: We haven't got the services that they have in the town.
W: Yes, you have. You've got everything here you require.

This gave credence to the existence of a structured hierarchy that had members who negotiated the ongoing function and membership of the homeless group living in Brooklyn.

With regard to the man referred to 'on the chair': he was not fifty metres from the picnic table where W and others were seated. The man looked like he had just arrived – he only had the pull-along suitcase with him. He sat alone on the park bench. At the picnic table there was a discussion underway about the man. It was unclear whether or not they had actually spoken to the man, but it was very clear that the man was not welcome to stay. There was one defining statement: "He will not be

here by nightfall."

(Reflection, April 2016)

Historical factors in terms of the manner in which the homeless community managed to remain ordered were also discussed:

R: Your community here seems to be so well run and organised. Does it take a lot of effort to keep it like this? I know you don't accept people who take drugs and are troublemakers. So is that how you keep going? Every community has bits and pieces of everybody in it, do you also see that? Do you all work together for the good of everyone else? The common good? Is that the way it is here?
B: Yes.
W: That is the only way it works.
R: Yes, well it is the only way it works. I'm in admiration. It is peaceful.
W had a discussion about 'hobos'. Referred to the American experience. Then referred to swaggies. Spoke about Hopeville [a Depression 'tent town' set up in the 1930s in Hornsby Heights where many 'down-and-out' people lived].
B: The first homeless people in the country were here in Brooklyn.
W: They weren't homeless. They worked on the railway.
B: The oyster farmers and that who lost everything. They lived in caves.
R: Was that really early in the piece before the bridge was built?
B: The first settlers.
R: I haven't looked at all the early history.
W: Do you want a few books? I've got every history book that flamin' TR has flamin' wrote.

(Third recorded interview 25 August, 2014, p. 14)

5.7. A word on analysis

To reveal the lives of the homeless/houseless people who live in and around the Brooklyn area in a way that ensured the events followed a chronology and are clear to the reader, has provided a challenge. In a reflexive manner I recorded my conversations and observations, to illuminate the main activities

and thoughts of the participants, through a pastiche of narrative contributions. I endeavoured to build on the data presented in Chapter Four, so that the complex lives I was observing would be depicted with as much substance and veracity as possible. My aim was to utilise rich descriptions providing relevant details of, specifically, the life of the participant. As the research progressed, the participants evolved in terms of the lived experiences they had, and the information they imparted to me. In the following chapter I will endeavour to examine this lived experience so that meaning can be intertwined throughout the statements, and events that unfolded over the research period, particularly pertaining to B.

Chapter Six

DISCOVERIES WITHIN THE DATA

"Masks are arrested expressions and admirable echoes of feeling, at once faithful, discreet, and superlative."

George Santayana

6.1. Introduction

Now I arrive at the task of unpacking the findings and attaching an analysis to the lived experience, as I have recorded and observed it over the many months in the field. The journey has been at once insightful, challenging and immensely rewarding. Similar to Raine (2013, p. 68) who states "the goal of discursive analysis is to set narratives in conversation with one another, so they are left to speak for themselves as the researcher weaves them together through an analytic commentary" , my aim was to utilise a dialogical narrative analysis to achieve the same outcome. I, as the analyst of the collected data, aimed to provide a translation of the ethnographic phenomena I had observed, with the goal of interpreting the actions and reactions as I experienced them at a reflective distance. The perception of chaos, as an outsider might view the lives of the homeless, existed within a space and place that I came to realise was, in reality, ordered, and this precinct provided some (surprising) security to its inhabitants. I needed to make sense of what I was observing and to make a transition from propositional knowledge to explicit knowledge. We do not have enough portraits of chronically homeless people, so my study was an excellent opportunity to expose lives in a purposeful and respectful manner.

This chapter will be the pulling together of the collected data and the review of this data to present certain revelations (Yin 2015). My research and its data would increase knowledge about chronic homelessness. It made discoveries about the participants that will be of great interest to those who work in the area

of homelessness, and others who seek to write policy to assist these people in their lives. This chapter will render by writing, and will utilise words as the analysis of the interactions and discussions and observation over the months of the study. It will show how this specific homeless site works and provide a deep and valid insight into B and her life. The question could be asked: What do we need to understand? And why utilise a process of data collection within qualitative research to arrive at an understanding? Snow, Anderson and Koegel (1994, p. 464) believe that "…research based on single encounters…runs the risk of premature generalization and diagnosis by treating a strip of behavior or communication as indicative of a pattern." I had spoken with and met up with my participants on numerous occasions and under differing circumstances. This was an essential component of the research process. Accuracy in interpreting the lives of B and her cohort was of prime importance to gain a real picture so hence a thorough qualitative research process was required. Marshall and Rossman (2006, p. 33) purport that:

> …qualitative methodologists have described three major purposes for research: to *explore*, *explain*, or *describe* a phenomenon. Synonyms for these terms could include *understand*, *develop* or *discover*.

It is with these aims in mind that I approached the research.

Layder (2013) believes that writing should start as soon as possible and even before the actual research is commenced. This I endeavoured to do, and the process included considerable reference to pre-data periods. I determined that the pre-data information was important and integral to the data collection during the actual research timeframe. Layder (2013) also argues that describing the site and its inhabitants, and their lives, is only the beginning, and that the real substance of the research is the analysis. From my research, I discovered there were many facets to the lives of the participants: their daily routine, their interaction with the communities in which they moved, their communication with authorities, the events they arranged and attended, their beliefs, and how they projected themselves onto the stage of life. With regard to ethnographic research Van Maanen (1988, p. 13) states "to write an ethnography requires at a minimum some understanding of the language, concepts, categories,

practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth, used by the members of the written-about group." This is absolutely necessary and supports my use of pre-data, and my reliance upon tacit knowledge, to provide the building blocks for the eventual propositional knowledge I would display. It also supports the use of narrative, and my close association with the Brooklyn community, and specifically the homeless people living in the environs (Hart 2011; Holstein & Gubrium 2012).

To repeat, my research sought to undertake communication with, and observation of, a woman living in a homeless community to answer the following question:

What is the nature of the 'lived experience' of one woman living in a houseless community?

The significant issue of homelessness versus houselessness became apparent in the process of my research and emerged as a pivotal point of observation. Further, my participant revealed herself to be a very complex person who lived her life at various levels, this most likely being the case so she could survive her harsh and challenging life. I undertook many months of data collection that included participant interviews, informal/spontaneous conversations, field work, interviews with significant others who were attached to the lives of the homeless population, and attendance at certain occasions, for example, the funeral of a homeless man. In association with my tacit knowledge, and a thorough literature review, I assembled the data as displayed in the previous two chapters.

Main (1994) undertook a thesis subject that looked at the reasons a person became homeless, be it due to structural (housing), or personal (trauma, loss of income, substance taking). He spoke about the *elevation* of homelessness into the sphere of a social problem, and discussed this with regard to how the social problem is seen to emerge and eventually be so recognised and entrenched that governments are compelled to act on a solution to the issues. Main agreed that the undertaking of social research which looked longitudinally at the matter to be studied was essential. The data collected over time would give validity to

the discovered phenomena, and thus recognition that the alleged issue was, indeed, a social problem. The research would be independent, as objective as possible, and sound in its interpretations within the scope of dialogical narrative analysis. I concur with this view, and thus I believe my observations are as accurate and insightful as they could possibly be. Main (1994) went further to compliment the use of close association with research participants in order to gather more meaningful data. My living for weeks-long periods of time in the local area of the research site is therefore ratified in its attempt to remain as objective as I could be but as close to B and W and their community as practicable (de Hoog 1972).

At some point there needed to be a conclusion to the study timeframe and, whilst it is poignant, this occurred naturally following the death of W, and B's move out of her cave. I kept in contact with B after the funeral and this was for a number of reasons, the main one being to follow-up on her circumstances and continuing lived experience, and to ensure her welfare needs were being adequately met.

6.2. What does it all mean?

In this introduction to the analysis, a tying together of the components of the data narratives in Chapters Four and Five show the overriding image of my participants is the reality of the disadvantage of being homeless in terms of material possessions and social standing in the general community. Unless otherwise informed, the general community largely saw the 'homeless and houseless' in a stereotypical manner – dishevelled, disorganised, lacking ambition, responsible for their own demise, hopeless, often malodorous and unintelligent. Hunt (2013) says that "…poverty reduces cognitive capacity – and not the other way around." This statement directly contradicts the usual attitude that homeless people entered their current plight because of lower intelligence; the challenge of dealing with their situation consumed their mental resources. Berger and Luckmann (1966, p. 182) argue that "it may be said…that social reality determines not only activity and consciousness but, to a considerable

degree, organismic function." However, when asked, the main participants portrayed their lives in a completely different manner. They did not see their lives as unusual or disadvantaged. In fact, they imparted many positives to living life as they did. They did not believe that they were disorganised with no purpose in life. The social construction of their reality was one of choosing to be in a cave and leading a life of their determination. They perceived the constraints in their existence as the fault of others, but the constraints were not those that observers saw. Their challenges were longevity of occupation of the cave, the ability to be self-determining in their decisions (for example, the arranging of a wedding ceremony) and the keeping in contact with their friends and associates. The homeless cave dwellers had many firsthand communications with authority figures, understood processes for enabling matters to happen (for example, to seek medical assistance for accidents, to receive mail, to purchase essential items) and were able to utilise up-to-date information technology to keep threads of friendships and family ties intact.

In a thesis focussing on identity and self-worth of homeless people, Keylon (1993) refers to Snow and Anderson (1987) and a discussion on "identity talk". As cited in Keylon (1993, p. 24) Snow and Anderson (1987) purport that homeless people utilise this type of talk to reinforce their "self-worth and dignity"; the "talk" incorporates "associational distancing" (where they consciously move away from the other homeless people and the stereotypical identity that these people are seen to have), "role distancing" (where homeless people appear to have a lack of commitment to a specific role due to the need to deny they would be included in the activity), and "institutional distancing" (where the entities that would be providing assistance to them are criticised) (Keylon 1993, p. 25). Particularly B's husband could be seen to utilise this type of "talk" – B was mostly overruled in the conversations I had with the two of them, so it was difficult to know if she actually agreed with her husband. However, these beliefs could possibly be the reason the diaries were not filled in and the art was not completed. W thought of himself as "above" the general social class of the other homeless residents in Brooklyn, he was derogatory about institutions such as his schools (including the Conservatorium of Music), and he had little respect for authority, for example, police, ambulance officers

and Council workers.

In referring directly to the Snow and Anderson article (1987), the “talk” also included what they called “embracement”. This referred to (p. 1354) “the verbal and expressive conformation of one’s acceptance of and attachment to social identity associated with a general or specific role, a set of relationships, or a particular ideology.” B and W believed it to be very sensible to have a cave as a home, where they could access services and come and go as they pleased. There is no doubt the concept of having a ‘home’ featured strongly in their attitude to their cave. They were firmly of the opinion that they had a home in which they conducted their lives, and shared their experiences. They portrayed their “role” (Snow & Anderson 1987, p. 1354) or lifestyle to be totally acceptable and that other homeless people were wanting to be with them every day doing what B and W did to occupy their day.

In terms of “associational embracement” (Snow & Anderson 1987, p. 1356) B and W certainly “expressed (their) self-identification as protector or defender of one’s buddies.” I witnessed numerous occasions when this occurred. They shared their food and alcohol. They enjoyed, with other homeless people, special occasions, that have already been mentioned as being extremely important in their lives. They cared for others who had medical issues, such as the period of time they looked after XXX when he was gravely ill. Interestingly, the Brooklyn homeless individuals usually never visited people who had left the community (for example, XXX was eventually housed in a unit in a suburb on the railway line from Brooklyn), and they rarely, if never, attended funerals of known homeless people who had died.

The third area of “identity talk” was termed “fictive storytelling” which Keylon (1993, p. 25) referred to as “use of imaginary self”. Snow and Anderson (1987, p. 1359) described what they spoke of as “embellishment” in the following manner “…the exaggeration of past and present experiences with fanciful and fictitious particulars so as to assert a positive personal identity.” I believe that in the interviews and spontaneous conversations I had with B and W, that there was embellishment of the details of some of the subjects that were discussed.

Examples of this included the management by B and W of the health emergencies of other homeless residents (XXX and his serious alcohol problem), control of who could be part of their small community, and their interaction with emergency services such as police and ambulance officers.

The area of “fictive storytelling” also included imagining what would be in store for them into the future, or “fantasizing” (Snow & Anderson 1987, p. 1360). B mentioned in one of our encounters that she was planning on conducting art classes at the Brooklyn Community Health Centre, and that she was aiming to start a community garden. These may have been a real goal for B, but they did not happen. The logistics of arranging such ventures was most likely too difficult.

Keylon (1993) goes on to report that in order to maintain a dignified self-worth, homeless people attempted to construct a reality that reflected what would be the ‘norm’. The planning of a wedding in a very public place to which everyone was invited was an example of this. Everything about the wedding could (and most likely, would) have been found at any wedding ceremony. There was a wedding cake (made and decorated by the daughter of the current nurse manager of the Brooklyn Community Health Centre), goblets to be used to toast the happy couple following the ceremony, a table on which to place gifts and food, a ‘band’ to play music (this one consisting of homeless musicians), an Altar to give a replication of a holy place, and the formal ‘giving away’ of the bride. In other words, they came out of the ‘other’ life they led and appeared to be as normal as any other couple at their wedding. During the ceremony there were very few clues that the wedding was different from others who might like to say their vows to each other in the open air; the park was beautiful with its gum tree rim and bright sunny sky.

The wedding gave them an authenticity they may not otherwise have had. Because the marriage was conducted by recognised Church personnel (a Captain of the Salvation Army) there was acceptance by this Church (and by other Churches in attendance at the wedding) and this, I believe, was of prime importance to B and W in their quest to be recognised as ‘normal’. Also, in

reference to attempts to demonstrate their lives fitted the 'norm', B and W were very keen to speak to anyone who would highlight their lives. Hence the newspaper articles and the television interview. In addition, agreeing to be a part of my research may be an example of their need to be seen and heard, and their aim to appear normal, and to demonstrate they were different from other homeless people. It could be said that they were very much wanting to be accepted, and so they created occasions where they could be observed as acting exactly the same as what they knew would happen in a general community: they shopped locally in the Brooklyn stores, sat out daily in the middle of parks and walked about openly in the area.

The use of a narrative design was absolutely essential in this research for a number of reasons. To begin, the unique nature of the community of cave dwellers, residing parallel to the small village of Brooklyn, was best illustrated through the stories and anecdotes provided by the participants. Secondly, the ability to give homeless or houseless people a voice, by way of enabling them to tell their stories, when they usually had no recognition, was extremely important. Schneider et al. (2019, p. 318) state:

> The storytelling approach with individuals who are experiencing homelessness serves multiple purposes; not only does it introduce alternative and empowering possibilities, but it also begins to address the oppression of homelessness. Recounting stories allows the storyteller to express self-worth…

Further, Schneider et al. purport "sharing stories can impart a new understanding, a chance for self-development…" (2019, p. 318) and this certainly provided the opportunity for everyone to share new learning about the experience.

Their descriptions of the lived experience, in a home that was a cave, could only really have been accurately captured via the use of interviews and conversations that were recorded then transcribed or noted in a journal. Barusch (2012) supports this view that vulnerable people are best served by being able to tell their own stories and express their opinions. Clandinin (2013) also supports this view, and promotes the use of storytelling so that the

participants, their lives and the information they share about themselves, is able to be seen. The couple were mostly invisible in the general community so it was imperative to utilise a methodology that would allow them to actually be seen.

The research journey for both the researcher and participants is such that both could gain a great deal, and have the opportunity to be different in terms of their learning and outlooks at the conclusion of the study. In relation to narrative inquirers, the fact that there is such a close apposition with the participants adds to the richness of the data collected, in that many events and actions can be witnessed and spoken about as these occur (Clandinin & Connelly 2004). The cooperative nature of my association with B and W certainly enabled me to see much of the day-to-day life and challenges and how they made decisions about their way forward in life.

McNaughton (2006, p. 137) states:

> …it is asserted…that the relationship between 'what happens' over someone's life course, what the actual circumstances of that life course have been, and how those circumstances are subjectively talked about can be brought together in the form of biographies to begin to understand and overcome (the problem of the difference between objective to the subjective views of the life).

The use of narrative to tell the stories lends itself to trying to understand and analyse the traumatic events that occurred that upturned the lives of the participants, especially B. In many ways it was easier to impart very personal and painful experiences when these were being revealed and discussed in an informal and friendly manner where there was trust on both sides. In conducting the research in a narrative manner, my experience became deeper and more insightful and so I grew throughout the compilation of the propositional knowledge; the participants were also given the opportunity to reflect on their lives and decisions and so possibly gain more insight into themselves as well.

As has been previously noted in this study, Brooklyn is a very isolated

community, and in its seclusion is a site that would be attractive to people who, for whatever reason, are seeking to have an isolated and separate existence. Whilst they can live in relative solitude in the bushland or a cave, or on the waterway in a vessel, or parallel to the activity of the village in a container or a garage, in Brooklyn they are close to services they may choose to access. They can attend medical appointments and other ancillary professionals such as podiatrists. General groceries (and alcohol) can be purchased. Some clothing can also be bought. There is the ability to access postal facilities, and mobile phones and related technologies are also available in the village. However, despite the proximity of the village and its advantages, there appears to be an element of loneliness in the lives of the homeless residents. I estimated that a significant number of local community people did not even realise there were homeless people in their direct vicinity. As Abramsky (2013, p. 4) says "all of these (poor) people share an existential loneliness, a sense of being shut out of the most basic rituals of society." B did not specifically speak about being lonely, but she spent a considerable time alone, and was largely isolated from the usual goings–on of the general community. I believe she used various mechanisms to cope with this 'alone-ness' – by marrying in a manner that ensured her wedding was a very public affair, and by exhibiting character traits to suit the circumstances of situations in which she found herself. The latter will be discussed in more detail later.

My research enabled me to closely observe a unique group of people living in a homeless/houseless community. There appeared to be a very good communication between the individuals in this group. Within the community I was given the privilege of meeting and speaking with two people as they lived as a married couple in a cave. There does not appear to be much recorded about such an existence. I became aware of certain social mores of the homeless, such as how they celebrated special occasions such as Christmas and birthdays – this usually took the form of each individual member bringing a contribution to the food and drinks and then sharing; they would often have a 'cook up' at one of the Council picnic barbeques. I was part of groups of homeless people as they gathered together, whether arranged or accidental, in parkland picnic areas – as I have already described, this gathering was almost

always at a park picnic table, and in the case of my participants, was located in the lower park area of Brooklyn. I was also involved when traumatic events occurred such as the decline in health, the dying and the funeral of the husband of B – the manner in which W was treated when it came to his health tests (it would be impossible for him to properly prepare for, as an example, a colonoscopy), his hospitalisation (he was subjected to stereotypical isolation and not attended to in a timely fashion – this being against standard hospital policy of seeing and determining care for a patient in a four-hour timeframe), and his death (he had a pauper's funeral that was unexpectedly 'normal'). These examples are representative of the challenges homeless people would regularly face.

Then there is the matter of *homelessness* versus *houselessness*. I had a sudden realisation that the term 'home' (and by association 'houselessness') was a significant consideration for the participants in my study. The evaluation of what a home meant to those who lived in a cave was no different to what people in general communities would feel about the place in which they lived and usually cherished. This realisation occurred during the interviews with B and W whereby they were very adamant that they were not homeless, merely 'houseless' because they considered their cave to be a home. Gieryn (2000, p. 466) states that "…the three defining features of place – location, material form, and meaningfulness – should remain bundled." The place that B and W called their home had these features, and they represented how most people would feel about the place in which they resided. The new awareness necessitated the changes to my question, and the perception that the term 'homeless' was narrow, and needed to be examined in the realm of what was traditionally and collectively known as homelessness. This would have implications for policy development and implementation of actions to better assist the needs of people as they grappled with reduced means.

Being the prime participant in my research, B proved to be a woman of complexities that extended from her childhood, through to her adult life and the events surrounding her in Brooklyn. In many ways she was an enigma. She appeared to exist in a background of chaos yet somehow she coped with the

extraordinary lifestyle. There was a stoic quality to her demeanour. The enigma eventually became a fact. I witnessed contradictory character traits that I came to believe were part of B's survival mechanisms. This 'chameleon-like' behaviour was a most interesting and surprising discovery and, as has been stated, will be discussed further in this chapter.

When examining the pre-data era, the wedding between B and W was a very unique occasion, where two people who lived in a cave married in full view of friends and family (homeless and general community attendees) and park visitors who would have had no idea they would be attending a wedding that morning. I have alluded to the wedding being an example of B and W emerging out of 'the other'. The majority of their existence was lived in what could be termed a 'liminal' state or 'other', that is, an area that is neither one sphere or another. They did not 'belong' in the general community and they believed they were different from the other homeless people in the Brooklyn area. In particular, B existed in this zone but not only because stereotyping and marginalisation forced her there; she utilised liminality as a place to go to protect herself and survive. This aspect will also be enlarged upon in this chapter.

Gauther (2010, p. 221) argues "the principle of beneficence…requires that health-care providers promote the patient's good, prevent harm for the patient, and do no harm to the patient." With relation to the illness of W, it could be said he was not treated in a manner that would be reasonably expected (Gauther 2010). He lived in a cave and had a rugged appearance (tanned skin with a long beard), albeit that he was clean and wore acceptable clothing. His medical management was not without its problems whereby his cave-dwelling was not taken into account when planning procedures. His admission into Accident and Emergency saw him (and his wife) stereotyped and treated with disdain. The principle of beneficence was not present for most of his hospital experiences. He was stigmatised and marginalised. B was included in this exclusion. A question could be asked: Did W have a good death? Was it dignified? The answer was in the negative for the most part. He was not treated with the care and respect he should have been whilst he was unwell. Another question could

be asked: Was he lonely in dying? This question is almost impossible to answer from my perspective, although he had his wife and JJJ, the advocate, with him in the illness journey. McNamara (2001, p. 3) states "…professionals (health) are at the coalface of death, on the one hand wielding enormous power, yet on the other humbled by the inevitable presence of death." Unfortunately, the 'wielding of power', in W's case, created a very uneven playing field given W (and B) were considered less than another patient and his wife might have been; their treatment illustrates that they were most likely regarded as 'non-human'.

The funeral of W was a sad occasion. He had died after a short illness that did not have a clear diagnosis – or none that B imparted to anyone. It was a pauper's funeral held at a crematorium, and included the rituals usually associated with such events. Sandman (2005, p. 114) argues "…the rituals have the benefit of providing us with a preformulated way to handle the situation and also a way to express a certain meaning through our way of handling the situation something that might give us a sense of security and confidence." The fact it was a pauper's funeral, and a Minister of Religion who did not know W conducted the service, made the funeral unusual. However, in attending this funeral I was not aware of any aspect that made it different from any other I had attended. B had a number of her own rituals, including placing W's silver cigarette lighter (memento mori) on his coffin at the end of the service. It could be said that the lighter was a significant symbol – perhaps of the life of W because he used it every day; in placing it on his coffin she may have been giving him permission to leave her. Johnson-Medland (2011, pp. 16-17) says "…the minds, stories, images, dramas…that we allow to carve the deepest meanings in our lives – the things we assign the most important meanings to – these things will be what we are surrounded by at death." I believe this illustrates W's death and funeral accurately.

A further question could be asked: Did the funeral of W give a voice to B? I believe it did. B said nothing at the service but her presence and actions said a great deal. She was the decision-maker in relation to the procedure of the funeral service, that had started as a burial but changed to a cremation. She

took the decision to give W's son his violin and not place it into the coffin, this in opposition to the request of a homeless friend of W (and 'powerful' figure in the homeless/houseless community in Brooklyn) who wanted the violin placed in his coffin. Her ability to have control of the arrangements was very much made possible because of the presence of JJJ, her advocate. With the mighty assistance of JJJ, B had the voice she needed at the funeral of her husband and beyond; she eventually she took possession of W's ashes – I believe she sprinkled them into the Hawkesbury River, a place nearby where she had shared much with her husband.

6.2.1. Reality

After observing the world of the homeless/houseless people who reside in and around Brooklyn, and B in particular, I believe the reality for these people is very much a dichotomy incorporating a number of aspects. Lemert (2012, pp. xv-xvi) goes some way to describe this reality by stating "individuals are who they are only partly because of what they do with what they have. They are also who they are because of what the wider social world gives or takes away." The reality for B and her cohort was a combination of who they saw themselves to be and how they were seen by others. In their seminal work Berger and Luckmann (1966, p. 183) state:

> Man is biologically predestined to construct and to inhabit a world with others. This world becomes for him the dominant and definitive reality. Its limits are set by nature, but once constructed, this world acts back upon nature.

Homeless people are often 'pathologised' (Reynolds 2014). By this I mean people viewing them from afar can usually only see what they perceive as the mal-adaptive attributes of homelessness. Snow, Anderson and Koegel (1994, p. 469) speak about the 'strip of behavior' exhibited by the homeless and upon which they are judged, and state that this provides:

> …(a) truncated, decontextualized, and overpathologized picture of the homeless, a picture that tells us relatively little about life on the streets as

> it is actually lived and experienced and that glosses over the highly adaptive, resourceful, and creative character of many of the homeless…

Lemert (2012, p. 201) says "…so it is that who a person is as an individual is certified by her recognizable social memberships. Identity is, therefore membership." The world saw the group of people living on the perimeter of the village of Brooklyn as a homeless community, and gave this group their usual accepted combined identity. This identity included assumptions about the way they looked, the manner in which they behaved, and reasons why they were homeless in the first place. Parsell (2009, p. 36) says that "as individuals and as a collective, the 'homeless' were labelled as 'bums' and 'deficient'; moreover, they were homeless because they were 'bums' and 'deficient'." As Parsell (2010b, p. 181) also states:

> …some homeless literature has tended to place too great an emphasis on homelessness as a defining characteristic of people who are homeless. As such, 'homeless people' are not only defined as the 'other' based on what they lack, but they have become depersonalised.

Referring to the research for his doctorate, Parsell (2010b, p. 181) discovered that "…no participant…perceived their homelessness as defining their identities, either their personal or social identities. Instead, people defined themselves with reference to family, and other life experiences or activities." Katz (1989, p. 236) states:

> We can think about poor people as "them" or "us". For the most part Americans have talked about "them". Even in the language of social science, as well as in ordinary conversation and political rhetoric, poor people usually remain outsiders, strangers to be pitied or despised, helped or punished, ignored or studied, but rarely full citizens, members of a larger community on the same terms as the rest of us. They are…not subjects who construct their own lives and history.

The Katz interpretation, even though it was made a number of decades ago, remains relevant and definitely applied to the homeless community in Brooklyn in the years subsequent to when they commenced living in the caves and in the local environment. Not a great deal had changed with respect to how homeless (or poor) people are viewed by the wider population. Giddens (1991, cited in eds Kennett & Marsh 1999, p. 45) states that "life-style choice, life planning and

the reflexivity of the self are central to the construction of an individual's identity in this risk environment and, in turn, are linked to the notion of ontological (or emotional) security." The homeless community created their lifestyles, and thus their lived experiences and habitus in answer to the opinions and expectations of the general community, and the need to establish their identity and self-worth, but they remained in their parallel accommodation without equal consideration.

6.2.1.1. Choice

As I have previously mentioned, the notion of why a person would 'choose' to be homeless has been debated throughout the cohort that works with and for homeless people, and has been written about in academic spheres. Parsell and Parsell (2012, p. 420) purport that the subject of 'choice' in this regard has not been thoroughly researched and state "…choice can be understood as an expression of agency and a commitment to a 'normal' identity." In relation to agency Parsell (2018, p. 37) argues "by means of human agency, identity is something individuals can both shape and express." He goes on to say (2018, p. 40) that "people's capacity to choose, like their capacity for agency, is influenced by the resources available to them." Characteristically homeless people do not have many resources so, after they (my participants as an example) set themselves up in a cave, and actually make the living arrangements work, this could be described as resilience in the face of many challenges. Because they were able to live in the cave with many of the 'comforts' of a home (for example a working kitchen, LED lighting, furniture, a library), their statements that they 'chose' to inhabit a cave seem to be supported. When delving into the issue, the factors that may have led to homelessness and/or were present in many homeless states, for example mental ill-health and substance and alcohol ingestion, most likely have not been taken into account in relation to the ability to make informed choices. As has been described, B and her husband maintained they had chosen to live in their cave in preference to other options available to them.

The stigma attached to this depersonalisation is widespread, and potentiated by what general community members might already believe about homelessness, as well as what they might read about homeless people (Snow, Anderson & Koegel 1994). As I have already mentioned, B and her husband did not see themselves in the category of being homeless and in possession of the characteristics generally attributed to a homeless person. They defined themselves by referring to family, friends and events they attended (Parsell 2010b). In the conversations with B and W, as well as their references to other people in their community, there was a high importance placed on the individual characteristics of people, as well as a focus on important occasions like birthdays and Christmas. There were numerous conversations about subjects that any married person in any community might discuss. An example of this occurred in the third interview (25 August 2014) where B and her husband were discussing the animals that entered into their cave home. The dichotomy relating to the identity of B could therefore clearly be seen – she was as worried about the entrance of goannas and possums and snakes into her 'home' as anyone might be in the general community; however, I feel sure the general population did not even consider that this would be a problem for those living rough. There is another aspect to this situation: a stark difference was that she and W tended to live in symbiosis with these animals as well. And in talking about these matters, B and W accepted them as part of the choice they had made to live in the way they did.

6.2.1.2. Group membership

The homeless community in Brooklyn existed as a loosely connected group – in other words it had a type of 'group membership' status. The community also had the label of a 'minority group'. Johnstone et al. (2015, p. 6) state (in relation to a study looking at the role of multiple group membership in homelessness):

> Although multiple group memberships can improve well-being, we predicted that homeless people who are arguably most in need of such identity resources are least likely to benefit from them because stigma and discrimination act as barriers against building social connections.

Whilst, on first assessment, it would appear logical that a multiple group membership could confer increased safety and other positive attributes, B and W did not gain appreciably from their 'membership'. The individuals in their group were all suffering their own challenges regarding their backgrounds and living conditions, and so were unable to be as supportive as they might have been, or provide stable friendship to the other members. As Johnstone et al. (2015, p. 3) purport:

> …individuals facing homelessness are different from other minority groups facing discrimination. For instance, they are subject to discrimination from their own friends and family, as well as the mainstream, and are often blamed for being in their predicament.

Other aspects of belonging to such a community included marginalisation, exclusion, abjection and isolation (Kristeva 1982; Desjarlais 1997). The homeless people in Brooklyn were definitely subjected to being treated in a manner different to other general community members. As has already been said, homeless people may be so invisible as to be not noticed, even when they frequented the services and shops in the village. Therefore, their marginalisation does not register with the general community.

6.2.1.3. Humanity

Another question that could be asked: Are they seen as 'truly human'? I have touched on this area and reflect on the statements that, according to Goffman (1963, p. 13) "the term stigma…will be used to refer to an attribute that is deeply discrediting…". And further, he purports (1963, p. 15) "by definition…we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human." It is my observation that the homeless, by virtue of the stereotypes usually attached to them by the general community, were thought of as something other than human. Research has been undertaken in the area of what it means to be 'human', one example being the work of Haslam, Loughnan and Holland (2013, p. 25) where they state that "…people may be perceived as lacking uniquely human characteristics, and

thus likened to animals, or as lacking human nature" when they are not thought of as a human. Another example of this type of research, written by Haslam et al. (2005, p. 937), undertakes four studies in relation to 'humanness' and purports that "people typically evaluate their in-groups more favourably than out-groups and themselves more favourably than others." To recapitulate, more 'humanness' is attributed to the group, or, (in the case of this study) the community in which the individual resides. Given people who are homeless are marginalised, and are grouped as a community unto themselves, they very much resemble the 'out-group' discussed in the research.

One of my significant observations occurred when B was walking past the café where my family and I were eating lunch. As I have described in Chapter Four, upon inviting B into the café, she was introduced to my family and appeared pleased to have this interaction. Hodgetts et al. (2007, p. 721) found that homeless people would seek out contact with the general community in recreation areas as well as in local businesses, and stated that "these interactions allow homeless people to claim status as local residents and to become 'one of us' who 'belongs'." The acceptance of bread from the proprietor displayed she had needs like any other person, but I also saw the personality change related to a 'chameleon-like' ability. Further, the presence of B and W in the public park area, seated at one of the covered picnic tables, and interacting with passers-by and others in the area, illustrates they wanted to be seen as a legitimate part of the general community – belonging to the community just like the rest of 'us'.

McNaughton (2006, p. 148) argues:

> The need to maintain a positive sense of identity and 'ontological security' as they made transitions through homelessness may also explain why (homeless people) individualized their experiences of homelessness further by 'blaming' others in the same situation for their homelessness whilst highlighting they were 'different'…

By attempting to be accepted in the general community, homeless people, and B and her husband as an example, definitely showed their need to present a positive identity, apart from their obvious homeless one, that might be better

accepted.

6.2.2. Outside in?

I was not living in a cave, so I can only comment on the lived experience from the platform of being an involved observer in the lives of my participants. I was not a 'true' insider, but rather existed on the outside of the homeless community, albeit I was able to participate in a number of personal life events. There were a number of occasions where I became a pseudo insider as the relationship with B developed, and events unfolded in her life. I had to be acutely aware of the potential conflicts and limitations associated with the close liaisons I was fortunate to have with B in particular. I acknowledged that I needed to engage but be disengaged at the same time.

As I have previously described, B and her husband participated in three separate but intertwined communities. The World Health Organisation (1998, p. 5) defines community as:

> A specific group of people, often living in a defined geographical area, who share a common culture, values and norms, are arranged in a social structure according to relationships which the community has developed over a period of time. Members of a community gain their personal and social identity by sharing common beliefs, values and norms which have been developed by the community in the past and may be modified in the future. They share some awareness of their identity as a group, and share common needs and a commitment to meeting them.

The WHO goes on to state (p. 5) that "…individuals do not belong to a single, distinct community, but rather maintain membership of a range of communities based on variables such as geography, occupation, social and leisure interests." I would argue that B and W and the homeless community fitted this description. However, B's 'trusted' community was specific to her. And they did not truly 'belong' to the general community by virtue of their persona as 'homeless'.

The homeless community was obviously the predominantly assumed community. Although a number of people in the Brooklyn area were unaware that the cave-dwelling group existed, those that did placed them into the category of a 'homeless' entity. By virtue of the geography of where they lived, and also their presence in parks during the day, they were close by the general community activities of daily living, and so might think, and most likely did think, that they were as equal in the general community as those who actually belonged. And, perhaps, more than equal. However, anyone who walked near the group sitting at the picnic table viewed them as separate to the general community. Some of these people would engage in conversation with the homeless group, but most merely exchanged pleasantries, if anything, and kept on going about their own lives. Lilly the dog was a common mechanism utilised by B and W by which to engage with local people. Lilly would bark at the numerous dogs being taken for walks by members of the general community, and a few words might be said about this.

The general community provided the services that could be accessed by the homeless community. The shops in Brooklyn were run by members of the general community. Homeless people bought food and other provisions from the local supply stores and clothing shop. They could access a Post Office box for their mail and purchase standard items such as mobile phones. As I have mentioned, the Brooklyn Community Health Centre was usually regularly visited by most of the homeless for health care reasons. Some had a shower in the Centre facility.

The existence of a trusted community was only obvious to me because of the close relationship I developed over the months of data collection. I was not, however, a member of the trusted community. This was a very small community, and these people had established the 'trusted' status after many years of interaction. Two of the trusted community were the advocate (JJJ) and the retired (JA) and current nurse managers of the Community Health Centre. I was not a member of any of the three communities by virtue of my research role. I was allowed to hear about the close relationships that constituted the trusted people, as well as the daily activities undertaken by homeless residents

as they negotiated their way with the general community and their own community members. I observed some of the happenings within the homeless community, but much of this occurred away from my view.

McNaughton (2006, p. 141) says that "people are always in a process of reconstructing the 'plot' of their past and present life, and future plans, so that it continues to conceptually make a cohesive 'whole' life story." Homeless people are no different from anyone else in society. They present themselves in terms of who they think they are and more specifically in an appropriate manner in relation to the communities with whom they interact. This interaction will be different for each community. This was true for B and her husband.

6.2.3. Who is B?

Over the months of the study, as well as the pre-data period, it can be seen that a valuable insight into the lived experience of B was achieved. However, it was difficult to write about B's life in a consecutive fashion, mostly because I was receiving snippets of information about her as the months went on; she was not overly forthcoming with information about her own life, and others imparted valuable insight and, as such, were vital in compiling the picture of B as a person. B was at the same time vulnerable and resilient. I was struck continually by her ability to cope with her life challenges and to survive the harsh environment. She always appeared to exude a calm countenance. Despite the fact she was a quiet person who did not force her opinion, and stood back from some discussions, she has the loudest voice if you listen. My aim was to 'humanise' B with the way in which I wrote the stories about her life, and how I analysed these narratives. This would be in contrast to the general view of homeless people that they were, indeed, not human.

Gathered from conversations with the couple, it was clear that B had endured a childhood of considerable neglect. Due to the impact of the lack of adequate physical and emotional care as a child, B brought many issues into adulthood that were largely not professionally identified and dealt with. B, herself, may not

have been aware that the traumas of childhood were impacting everything she attempted. FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless) (2017, p. 1) reports that:

> It is increasingly recognized that many people who are at risk of or are experiencing long term homelessness have been exposed to trauma. However, service systems are not always equipped with the necessary tools or the right responses to help people who have a history of trauma.

Pluck et al. (2011, p. 33) reported that "sexual abuse, emotional neglect, and physical neglect were all negatively correlated with IQ." Majer et al. (2010) conclude (in relation to a cognitive function study) that "our results suggest that physical neglect and emotional abuse might be associated with memory deficits in adulthood, which in turn might pose a risk factor for the development of psychopathology." Brandt (2017) states "because of childhood emotional trauma, we may have learned to hide parts of ourselves." It is my view that B's childhood trauma had significantly and negatively impacted on her and caused her to bury parts of herself, as well as resulted in the use of the mechanisms she used to deal with her life. I will be discussing this discovery more fully in the section on liminality and the discourse about 'chameleon-like' behaviour.

Another perspective regarding trauma is the effect of actually being homeless on the individual. Anecdotally, it has been said that one third of people have a mental illness before becoming homeless, and a further one third of people develop a mental illness when they are homeless. Openminds (2019) purports that:

> People with mental illness are more at risk of homelessness, due to increased vulnerability, difficulty sustaining employment, and withdrawing from friends and family. The stress that comes with homelessness also in turn increases the risk of mental illness.

Homelessness NSW (n.d.) states that "documented rates of the prevalence of mental illness in homeless people range from 2 to 90%." Goodman, Saxe and Harvey (1991) investigated the concept of homelessness itself being a risk factor for emotional disruption. They state (p. 1219):

> Psychological trauma is likely among homeless individuals and families for three reasons. (a) The sudden or gradual loss of one's home can be a stressor of sufficient severity to produce symptoms of psychological trauma. (b) The conditions of shelter life may produce trauma symptoms. (c) Many homeless people – particularly women – become homeless after experiencing physical and sexual abuse and consequent psychological trauma.

To have an acquired or traumatic brain injury is yet another form of disruption in the lives of homeless people. Due to the harsh nature of life in bushland or living rough generally, homeless people are likely to sustain injuries from falling or, often when alcohol is involved, the injuries may be sustained in fights. In fact, a large number (perhaps almost three quarters) of homeless people have acquired the brain injury before they even became homeless, and the lifetime prevalence for traumatic injury is high (Hwang et al. 2008).

As can be seen there is much evidence about the powerful impact trauma can, and does, have on the lives of the victims. Many are powerless to alter the course of the abuse and only when they are able to leave the environment in which they reside can they escape the traumatic treatment. It appears B lived for many years enduring a number of forms of abuse. She may have had problems with attachment to her carer(s) but I will not enlarge upon this aspect, suffice to say that according to Masterton (2005, p. 3), it would appear that in lack of attachment "…the key pathology was the developmental arrest of the self, along with the ego and object relations…". I do not have the skills to diagnose what the occurrence of trauma on B had caused, but there is no doubt her life following her leaving home and living with one of her sisters was unsettled. As I have described, she had erected two tents (one in the bush and the other on the beach) and so already had accommodation when a unit rented with her sister burnt down. As I have previously said, B appeared to be 'homeless' even before she was, literally, homeless and this was most likely due to her abusive and stressful early childhood and upbringing.

When B became homeless she was a fragile, traumatised and isolated person. Yet somehow she managed to manoeuvre her way through life and survive the disadvantage of having no fixed address. I cannot determine when she

developed coping mechanisms to deal with her challenging life, but I saw firsthand the use of certain traits when in situations that required a particular, specific reaction. This I determined to be a 'chameleon-like' ability and it was the best way to describe what I was witnessing. I have created the following sociogram (Diagram 2) in the attempt to capture diagrammatically the essence of B with regard to her character traits, and the communities in which she lived:

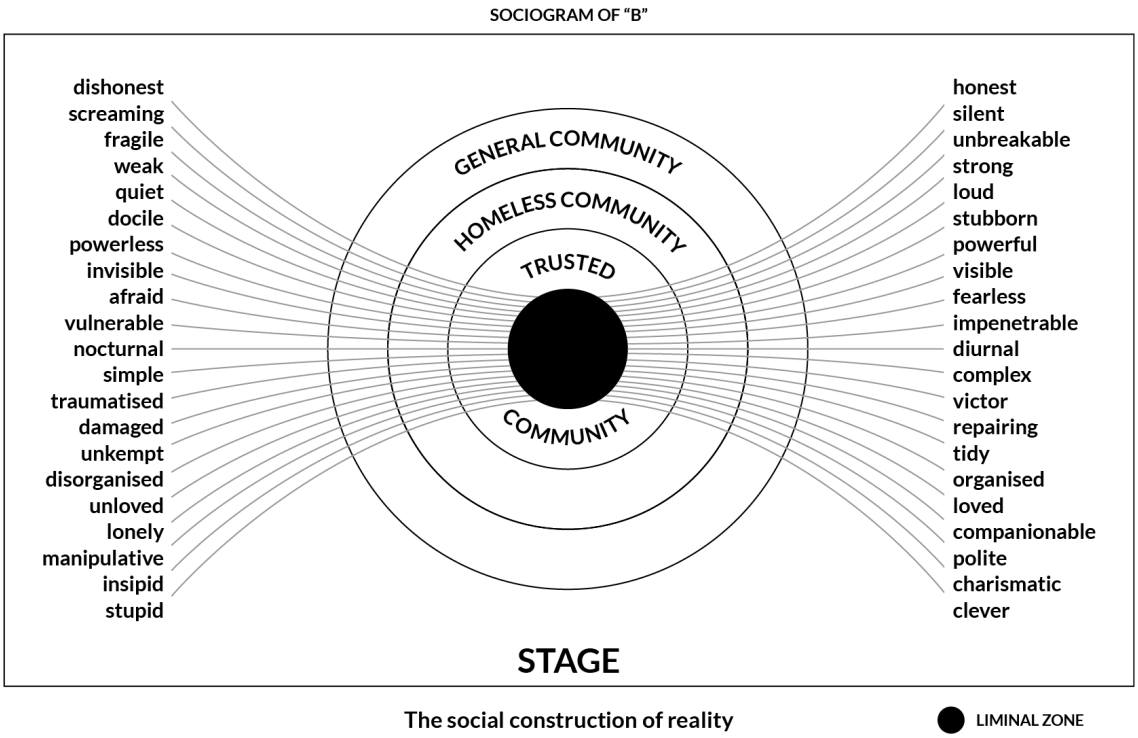


Diagram 2: This sociogram represents B in her social network.

A sociogram, being a graphic representation of relationships in a social sense, is able to portray information visually and so is effective in capturing interactions. Tubaro, Ryan and d'Angelo (2016, p. 1) state "…visualization appears as a unique opportunity for mixing methods in the study of social networks, emphasizing both structure and process at the same time." In the case of B, regarding her character traits and coping abilities, it was helpful for clarity to create a sociogram to capture the contrasting character traits, and to do so through the prism of the communities in which she moved. The sociogram placed B on her stage as she constructed her reality and dealt with everything around her. In examining the contrasting traits, and reflecting back on information already provided about B, I have given a number of life

experiences that can be viewed from the perspective of how she used two presentations of herself to deal with whatever was needed. Her 'chameleon-like' behaviour will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, but it is relevant now to include this sociogram to lay the building blocks upon which more analysis can take place. The sociogram illustrates not only results of the study, it also supports the data gathering and analysis stages of the research. It is a powerful and effective tool by which much can be imparted diagrammatically, and it provides a useful medium to describe the competing characteristics, indeed, the contrasting emotions, possessed by B.

6.2.4. Three communities

I have previously described in some detail the existence of the three communities – general, homeless and trusted. B seemed to move easily between them (the communities are inter-related), but also spent time in a place that she had as her own. To review, and in reference to the sociogram (Diagram 2), in the general community there were the entities that homeless people needed to assist their lives in caves, or on the river in a vessel or camped out elsewhere. The health centre provided a degree of emotional support and acceptance as well. The homeless community lived largely in the bushland surrounding the village of Brooklyn. Some lived close by on boats. There were some itinerant members who left the area, but returned periodically. There were other homeless people who were based elsewhere in the State and visited the Brooklyn area from time-to-time. The trusted community existed within the general community but also outside the Brooklyn precinct. The nurse managers were very important to the local homeless people; a close bilateral relationship was shared over successive managers. B and W had an advocate (JJJ) who came from outside the Brooklyn precinct, initially as a volunteer providing a weekly barbeque in the Upper McKell Park, but then on a more regular basis when she developed a close association with B and her husband. The understanding shared between B and JJJ was incredibly strong and extremely empathetic. I believe B cared as much about JJJ as the advocate cared about her homeless friend. More than anyone else, the trusted

community gave B strength, as well as a voice when this was needed.

6.*2.5. In the liminal zone*

To enlarge upon the concept of a liminal zone, and also in reference to the sociogram, this has two applications in terms of this research. The first is the place that homeless people en masse exist. They are largely shunned by the general community, and stereotyped and marginalised by virtue of the way they look and their lack of possessions. They are placed in a zone that is outside that of everyone else. In Turner (1974, p. 8) this is described by stating "the liminal character becomes a marginal one, permanently on the fringe of society, with little or no hope of inclusion." The second application is the place that B went to, seemingly in her own mind, as part of her lived experience. This place was not able to be accessed by anyone else. The following is an attempt to explain what this zone meant to B.

As I have already described, B was a member of the three separate communities – general, homeless, trusted – but also had a part of her life that only she experienced; this I have described as the liminal zone. From the perspective of anthropology, the term 'liminality' can be defined (Liminality 2019) as:

> …the quality of ambiguity or disorientation that occurs in the middle of a rite of passage, when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual status but have not yet begun the transition to the status they will hold when the rite is complete.

It is also purported (Liminality 2019) that whilst in a liminal stage, a person is positioned as if about to undertake a new beginning "between their previous way of structuring their identity, time, or community, and a new way, which completing the rite establishes." From my observation, this zone was the place B went to when she had periods where she did not wish to (or could not) interact with the other communities. I believe B was in a "transitional" place, on a "fringe or border" of an area that had more stability (Correia, 2011, p. 230) and that she went there on occasions when she was alone.

When describing liminality, Neilsen (2008, p. 98) argues that "in social science research, liminality and uncertainty seem antithetical to a discipline that looks for answers and is founded on practices of studying and then attempting to represent others." In saying this, it is necessary for me to address the observation that B moved into a liminal zone regularly in her attempts to survive her life in a harsh environment. Her troubled childhood, and the trauma of events later in her life (for example, the death of her fiancé) were other reasons she needed to 'escape' from the reality of her life to somewhere the usual pressures could not touch her. I am not qualified to make any diagnosis regarding this, but I believe I most likely did observe her in the liminal zone on a number of occasions. One of these times was her presence in the park where a lone seat was in the middle of the grass area, and where B often sat alone (except for the presence of her dog). She would curl up in an almost foetal position on the chair, and rock in a rhythmical fashion. She appeared to be oblivious to the world around her. Deardorff (2009, p. xvi) purports that "from the perspective of civil society, that which is not proper, or normal, or accepted is deemed to evince a social or moral "disfigurement, ugliness, or crookedness." This would be an accurate overview of how the homeless are perceived. An analogy can be made between how the homeless appear to live, and how the general community view these lives. Deardorff (p. xv) also states "there is the 'other' who stands at the margin within society and at once at the edge of consciousness within each individual." As has already been mentioned, the general community view of the homeless can be referred to as the 'other', or people existing in a 'liminal' zone. B not only lived within a 'liminal' community, there was also a 'liminal' area within herself.

Correia (2011, p. vii) states "rather than mental illness, addiction, poverty, or ill-fated fortunes, I propose that the central problem of homelessness rests with an individual's alienation from his or her community or in-group." This alienation could be described as a journey into a liminal state. Correia (p. 1) believes that "…urban life alienates the poor and minorities, and the marginalized are often found exiled to 'unbuilt' liminal places, just outside the spaces that people call home." She also purports (p.2) that:

> Homelessness, one significant instance of urban failure, is characterized by an existence in liminal space, on the edge of defined architectural structures, and yet still governed by social norms.

This aspect of liminality could be interpreted that living outside the general community would also be considered to be living in a liminal manner. Also, these words can be used to describe B and her escape into a zone only she can enter. So, to repeat, there is the liminal zone where B goes in her moments of isolation, as well as the use of the word liminality to describe the entire homeless population.

6.2.6. A voice?

Are the homeless unable to be heard? If this is the case, why does it happen? Most people who work in the homeless sector would agree that most homeless people are invisible, and do not have a voice, and so cannot advocate effectively for what it is they need. Horvath (2011), in a blog titled Homeless Hub, describes a man who is homeless and who, when given a pamphlet one day, states: ""what! You can see me? How can you see me? I'm invisible!"" Horvath goes on to say "it isn't hard to comprehend this man's slow spiral into invisibility. Once on the street, people started to walk past him, ignoring him as if he didn't exist…". Robinson (2008, p. 12) also recognises that the homeless do not have their plight adequately recognised; she stated that it was her 'determined' aim to "…undertake the project of making visible felt homelessness…". Those who work with homelessness find a degree of frustration in highlighting the problems confronting homeless people to the level of government that is able to make changes to policy – homeless issues are not election winners and so are not usually given the focus they deserve. Even when working in the sector, social workers, counsellors and others are often thwarted from being able to change systems of services delivery to improve the lot of the homeless. As has been previously alluded to, Schneider et al. (2019) reported on a research project that was designed to give a voice to homeless people. A storytelling approach was utilised that provided the opportunity for

the participants to recount their experiences in their own words. Schneider et al. (2019, p. 319) believe that "since the primary goal of research is to understand, storytelling that elicits narratives becomes an ideal method, particularly within qualitative research, that seeks to explore and understand specific themes." My search to discover the lived experience of an individual is a perfect fit, therefore, with a narrative non-fiction gathering of the statements of the participants to enable them to have a voice.

6.2.7. Access and use of services

Health care provision was available in Brooklyn to all who wished to access it and, as I have stated, most people in the homeless community had some form of contact with the Brooklyn Community Health Centre. These services were theoretically accessible to homeless/houseless people in the Brooklyn area despite the isolated location of the village. Homelessness is well-known to increase risk of ill-health. Bower, Conroy and Perz (2018, p. e241) state "both loneliness and a lack of social integration are associated with serious physical and psychological health issues." When an individual is without a structure within which to live, there are implications for adequate hygiene, as well as conduct of the activities of daily living, such as preparation of food. There is exposure to weather and environmental conditions that may affect health – heat, cold and poor air quality. A person who lives rough may face threats to their safety as well as their mental and physical health. Even if services are close by, there may also be challenges in accessing these needed services, for example, a difficult to negotiate terrain, or reluctance to have contact with health personnel due to issues such as depression. In Brooklyn, due to the harsh environment (exposure to the elements, traversing rough and very steep surroundings to move from caves to parks to services/shops) and probable poor nutrition, the homeless community were all affected by physical and psychological health challenges.

Mental health has been listed as a reason a person may become homeless. Additionally, mental health issues can ensue from being homeless. Buhrich,

Hodder and Teeson (2003, p. 51) purport “there are high prevalence rates of schizophrenia among people who are homeless.” Suzuki et al. (2015, p. 240) state “there is a high prevalence of depression in adults with a history of childhood maltreatment.” It could be said that B most likely had mental health issues resulting from her childhood, from tragic events as an adult, as well as her life as a homeless person. It is difficult to determine the mental health status of B when she commenced living in tents and she was adopting an itinerant lifestyle. Whilst homeless B, endured many difficulties in staying healthy and safe.

The tragic death of her fiancé in Adelaide pushed her into a mental health abyss, whereby she was deeply affected by the loss. The researcher became aware of B’s fear of the night and her wailing after dark. She was unable to sleep until the early hours of the morning and slept until late in the day. The profound impact of just this one event led her to initially decide to bury W instead of cremating him. Banyard (1995, p. 879) states, in relation to her study on homeless females and coping mechanisms, that “they mentioned contending daily with such negative affects (sic) as frustration, sadness, fatigue, and depression.” I am not in a position to diagnose mental health challenges, but B suffered emotionally following at least the death of her fiancé. Fields (2011) says “…for individuals who have been excluded on the basis of being homeless and mentally ill, belonging and the community to which one belongs define self and its value.” B’s membership of the homeless community had obviously offered her some form of security, solace and help in her trying times, as well as providing her with an identity. Fields (2011) speaks of belonging in the context that it very much includes how we see ourselves. B identified with her homeless persona and had stated this in her interviews (for example, she spoke of accepting the entrance of wild animals into her ‘home’, describing being homeless as ‘amazing’ – see p. 183) and had no apparent desire to change her life as a cave dweller.

The question needed to be asked: Were the local available services adequate to meet the needs of homeless people? If they were adequate, what barriers existed that prevented homeless people from accessing these services? In

relation to why homeless people may not adequately take advantage of health care, Flick (2007, p. 694) states that:

> Distrust towards and negative experiences with the medical system, living conditions which are dominated by other needs to be fulfilled first and the like build up barriers on the side of the possible clients. Lack of knowledge, aversions and prejudices on the side of health professionals may contribute as well as keeping barriers high – at least around regular health services.

From my surveillance of the health care provision to B and W, the local health centre appeared to provide a good level of care, and the staff were familiar with homelessness, and the need to adapt their services to meet the specific needs of these people. An example of this is the provision of a place to have a shower in the health centre (and possible future plans for laundry facilities). Another example is the flexibility of the timeframe for meeting with homeless people in the area whereby early morning access was available (that is, access outside the usual opening times of the centre) and this might also include food. The issues W (and B) faced when he needed a special test and then had to be transferred to Accident and Emergency, and the subsequent attention he received there, showed staff in other health scenarios possessed 'lack of knowledge, aversions and prejudices' that severely impacted on good health care for homeless individuals.

6.3. Homelessness versus houselessness

So many policies and documents refer to homeless people in a very narrow context. Despite numerous policies (government and non-government) stating that the needs of the unique individual will be met, many needs are not addressed in this manner. Unfortunately, most of the policies and aims for the relief of homelessness are a 'one-size-fits-all'.

B had endured a very difficult childhood and young adult life. As I have described, she was 'homeless before she was homeless' where the trauma she had endured had had a profound effect on her, and she seemed to accept her

transition into ‘homelessness’ as a natural progression. I believe that in her mind she was a person with no ‘home’ because the place she had spent her childhood was so inhospitable, and not like a home that is usually described. When the unit she shared with her sister burnt down B already had two tents constructed away from this dwelling – one in the bush and one on the beach. B’s sister went on to live in the beach tent and B lived in the bush tent. From the time of the unit burning, B did not move back into usual and typical ‘normal’ housing – she became homeless (by the accepted definition) and moved around. When moving around she remained homeless. But at the point she started to live in the Brooklyn cave she no longer considered herself to be homeless, merely ‘houseless’. The cave became her home and provided her with most, if not all, of the attributes of a ‘real’ home.

A brief reference, again, to the meaning of what a home is to individuals is relevant here. Home signifies a way of living. Giddens (1991, p. 81) states that “a lifestyle can be defined as a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity.” The structure of a home projects information about the character, or identity, of an individual. Home is to one person what it may not be to another. Commonly, a home is a place of security and safety and happiness and comfort. If a person has the feeling a place is a home, then it is in the eyes and heart of this individual (Bogac 2009). Home can be viewed as a control mechanism – to be in charge of one’s environment and space and place in the world is paramount to some people (Darke 1994). Home for many is where the family resides. Home and house are quite different, although related in many ways and lives. There does not have to be a traditional structure of walls and roof for an occupancy to be termed a ‘home’. B and W were adamant that their cave was a home that was as meaningful as any structure in the general community. A home did not have to be four walls.

To enlarge upon the concept of ‘home’, Mallett (2004, p. 63) states that:

> “Home is place but it is also a space inhabited by family, people, things

> and belongings – a familiar, if not comfortable space where particular activities and relationships are lived. …home (can be) a virtual place, a repository for memories of the lived spaces. It locates lived time and space, particularly intimate familial time and space.

In a discussion about the understanding of what a home constitutes, Mallett (2004, p. 70) also states "…home is often described in the literature as a haven or refuge." Mallett refers (pp. 82-83) to Tucker (1994, p. 184) who she says:

> "…states (home) may simply be a *space* where people feel at ease and are able to express and fulfil their unique selves or identities. The home of which he speaks though is not conflated with the house. It may be an emotional environment, a culture, a geographical location, a political system, a historical time and place…and a combination of all of the above.

Therefore, the term 'home'-less may not apply to all the people who fit the definition of being homeless. B and W maintained on a number of occasions that they were 'houseless' and not 'homeless'. Parsell (2012, p. 159) believes that the meaning of 'home' is 'multi-dimensional' and argues "…the proposition that home and housing should not be conflated…" and "home is thought to be subjectively experienced." Groot and Hodgetts (2012, p. 267) purport that:

> …a houseless person can engage in homemaking while they are living on the streets. Despite lacking a conventional dwelling, houseless people's lives are just as richly emplaced through the use of personal objects as the lives of housed people.

Whilst B and W are not technically 'on the streets', the Groot and Hodgetts article supports the notion of being 'houseless'. B and W had chosen to live in a cave that was for their own use (no other homeless person was allowed to invade the area) and they had placed furniture and other personal objects in the cave that they expected would be undisturbed.

Early settlers to Brooklyn lived in tents and the like and would have considered their dwellings to be a 'home' whilst they resided in the probably temporary accommodation. It is interesting that the history of the creation of Brooklyn has had transitory people, not unlike B and W, in that the road and rail builders as

well as the fishermen and oyster industry workers likewise lived in non-traditional structures, for example tents, for varying periods of time. Others who came and went in the Brooklyn area were lime burners, explorers and First Nations peoples (Richmond, 2019). All of these people may have been living in temporary accommodation over the periods they resided in the Brooklyn area.

Fig 6: Historic photograph of the early settlement of Brooklyn – note the tents (photograph courtesy of TR circa late 1800s)

The above photograph (Fig 6) is taken some time in the late 1800s and depicts tents on the banks of the Hawkesbury River. TR, who provided the photograph, has informed me that the photograph pre-dates 1908 due to the configuration of the railway station platforms – there were two platforms until 1908 when a single island platform was constructed. The area now designated as McKell Park had not yet been reclaimed and this, too, dates the image to pre-1908. TR recalls that in the early years of the twentieth century Brooklyn had become a favoured location for homeless people and that by living near the waterfront in primitive tents and huts, the residents were able to supplement their diets with fish caught from the rocks.

6.4. Survival: being a chameleon

In order to provide a clear picture of the complexities of the character of B, I created the diagrammatic representation in the form of a sociogram (Diagram 2 as seen in 6.2.3.) which has been discussed earlier in this chapter. It includes attributes giving B the ability to survive a harsh environment and way of life and it depicts how she survived these challenges. The sociogram lists the contrasting and contradicting character traits through the prism of the communities in which B lived. It represents these attributes on a stage that demonstrates where we all play out our identities, similar to the way in which actors play their parts (Goffman 1959). Brandt (2017) purports that when significant, unresolved childhood trauma occurs the person may create a 'false self' in order to deal with the matter. In my view, B created a chameleon-like construction of reality to enable her to appropriately react to the circumstances she encountered in whatever walk of life in which she found herself. Banyard (1995, p. 873) states "…coping consists of several stages, including cognitive appraisal of the situation, assessment of available coping options, and implementation of a response." The chameleon-like aptitude that B appeared to use for her survival was also a coping mechanism. She went from one trait to another as was required in her day-to-day dealings with the communities in which she moved (Gee 2000). As well, she switched from one end of the particular attribute spectrum to the other, also to accommodate what was required in a particular reaction or coping situation. These attributes were very often mirror images of each other, or the exact opposite, and the contrasting changes could happen in a very short space of time.

Chartrand and Bargh (1999) have described the 'chameleon effect' whereby a person can mimic the behaviours of others to increase the 'likeability' of the person copying the actions. They conducted a number of experiments to see if this phenomenon could occur between strangers, if a person would be more 'liked' by exhibiting the behaviour, and if the personality of the person who copies is relevant to the phenomenon occurring. Whilst it was concluded that individuals did adopt the mannerisms of other people (including strangers) the

adoption by B of certain similar traits extended past this. The sociogram, which depicts the list of contradictory character traits of B that the researcher noted throughout the study, provided an explanation for when B was observed to possess the ability to change from one to the other to suit the occasion in which she found herself. This did not appear to be done to 'mimic' the other person or people; B utilised this process to place herself in the world (or on the stage) in the manner she determined would be appropriate to deal with her life challenge at that time (Goffman 1959). Whilst I believe that B unintentionally moved from one trait to another, I feel that she had learned to do this to best deal with whatever circumstance she needed to accommodate or endure. Furthermore, her long list of contrasting character traits usefully reflected (that is, achieved the desired effect) what another person might see in any set of situations in which B might be.

The analogy with the animal chameleon and the behaviour of B is interesting to note, and assists to understand her and how she approaches her life. A chameleon can assess a wide spectrum of space around it – B needed to be able to do this as well; she lived in such an adverse environment that her ability to decipher what might be dangerous, for example, was essential. The changing colours of the chameleon enabled it to adjust to its environment – B utilised the ability to alter her mood or perspective accordingly. A chameleon can camouflage into its surroundings when it needs to be 'invisible' – B was able to blend into her environment so no-one really noticed her moving about; this was very useful if she was fleeing a threat. B had the ability to deal with the needs, hazards and challenges of her life by alternating between her contradictory character traits, and thus she was able to gain a sense of security and safety in her environment as well. Not only did B (as does a chameleon) endeavour to make her life more comfortable by being able to change her countenance, she also had the ability to communicate with others through this medium as well. Further, like a chameleon, B was able to move effectively around her environment and utilise her senses (unperceptively) to assess a situation.

Lakin et al. state that, regarding the 'chameleon effect', they believe "this type of

mimicry occurs outside of conscious awareness, and without any intent to mimic or imitate" (2003, p. 145). Likewise, and to reiterate, B used her ability to negotiate her needs but, I believe, did not consciously realise she was doing so. The fact she could change her 'colours' so easily definitely assisted her to survive. Lakin et al. also state that "…mimicry has now evolved to serve a social function. Nonconscious behavioural mimicry increases affiliation, which serves to foster relationships with others" (2003, p. 145).

I propose that B not only utilised her 'chameleon-like' attributes, literally, to survive her life, she utilised her abilities to develop relationships with people in the communities with which she interacted. One example would be the acquisition of a warm winter coat. I had noticed the coat in the clothes store in Brooklyn only a week or so before I saw B wearing it. She told me the store manager had given the coat to her.

6.5. Reflections of the researcher on the lived experience

Hodgetts et al. (2007, p. 722) state "material hardship can be exacerbated by social stigma and a sense of self as deviant and out of place." There would be little doubt that the stigma and marginalisation that was directed to B and W in their cave life made their existence more challenging than it would have been. Despite their belief that they had a life of their choosing, I observed that B and W had the stereotypical attitude imposed upon them, and this then led to the difficulties they faced being more pronounced. Like so many other homeless people they appeared to be judged on this stereotypical 'ideal' without any thought being paid to them as individuals. There was no consideration of B and W possessing qualities (such as resilience and creativity), or attributes that were positive (society regarding them as human beings possessing empathy, strength, kindness, warmth, love and what makes us 'human'). B, being the main participant, moved between her three communities and into her 'liminal' zone as the need arose. She lived her life on the edge of society utilising 'chameleon-like' personality changes to address whatever was before her. B and her husband firmly believed they had a home in the cave in which they

lived, and therefore they did not fit the definition of being ‘homeless’ – they merely did not have a house.

Whilst my research illustrates aspects of being homeless that have been found in other research on homelessness and literature on this subject, there are distinctly new discoveries that add to the information currently held. These discoveries will add to the body of knowledge about chronic homelessness, particularly pertaining to living in a cave, this cave being thought by its inhabitants as a ‘home’. The notion of being ‘houseless’ as opposed to ‘homeless’ is strongly presented in the lived experiences described. This discovery has definite implications for how people, currently defined as homeless, should be viewed, and for future policy endeavours. The insight gained into the three communities in which B and W interacted is another example of an unexpected finding. The existence of three communities, and the participation of homeless people within and across them, shows tremendous order and resilience. Thirdly, the manner with which B coped with her past trauma, and present disadvantage and challenges, that is her occupation of a ‘liminal’ zone and the utilisation of ‘chameleon-like’ attributes, is a most important discovery which has shown a deep analysis of a person, and how this individual creates a reality as well as makes daily decisions for life.

Chapter Seven

FROM ONE EDGE TO ANOTHER

"Finally, the lives of some of the people who made a transition out of homelessness are presented, to go the full circle in this study of lives, trapped at the edge."

Carol McNaughton (2008)

7.1. Introduction

And so we come to the penultimate comments on this research project. Following a thorough collection, and rigorous analysis of the data assembled, there are a number of comments and recommendations to be made. I have endeavoured to present a thorough narrative life-storying, as detailed as possible, concerning the woman, B, who lived in a cave with her husband, parallel to a small village, Brooklyn. The study was carried out over a number of months and incorporated a variety of aspects of their lives, including a wedding prior to data collection, as well as a funeral as a conclusion to the study. To repeat, it sought to answer a question that asked about the nature of the lived experience of a woman living in a houseless community, and the research utilised a qualitative approach. Creswell (2009, p. 26) states:

> One of the chief reasons for conducting a qualitative study is that the study is exploratory. This usually means that not much has been written about the topic or the population being studied; and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an understanding based on what is heard.

This was true in relation to the selection of the participants – chronic homelessness has been acknowledged as not having enough work undertaken to address its definition and lived experiences (Parsell 2014); a married couple, living in a cave on the edge of a small village was somewhat unique.

The researcher spent many weeks in the site speaking to the participants, and observing their lives within the communities with which they interacted. Their

day-to-day activities were recorded. The beliefs and feelings of the participants were analysed. Giddens (2009, p. 251) states:

> …the study of apparently insignificant forms of social interaction is of major importance in sociology…we can learn a great deal about ourselves as social beings…the study of everyday life reveals to us how humans can act creatively to shape reality…(which) is not fixed or static; it is created through human interactions. (The) notion of the 'social construction of reality' lies at the heart of the symbolic interactionist perspective…

Much of the lives of the homeless/houseless people observed in the study was mundane and routine, however the details revealed a great deal about the coping abilities of the participants, and how outside individuals viewed homelessness. Occasions that were not their usual activities of daily living, such as the wedding and the funeral, also revealed a great deal about the establishment of the identity of the participants, and their sense and projection of agency and structure. There were many stories told during the data collection.

The use of narrative as my method of capturing the lived experiences has been very effective in achieving the aims of the research. To reiterate, Webster and Mertova (2007) state:

> Narrative records human experience through the construction and reconstruction of personal stories; it is well suited to addressing issues of complexity and cultural and human centredness because of its capacity to record and retell those events that have been of most influence on us.

The months of observing and spending time with the participants, and their associates, produced many stories, and revealed a well-structured existence that contained order and meaning. The relationship that developed between the researcher and B and her husband was unique, and a sense of trust became cemented in the interactions shared with B and W and their cohort of homeless people. This sense of trust permeated into the permission the researcher was afforded to participate in the more personal aspects of the lives of the homeless individuals. The advocate (JJJ), in particular, who was fiercely protective of B and her cohort, could see the relationship I had with the

participants was based on respect and empathy, and so cooperated with my need to conduct an interview and provide perspective.

Fig 7: "The photo of three people smiling out of a cave in the headland of Brooklyn depicts the newly married homeless couple, B and W, and the researcher, on the day a television crew was invited into this environment to do a follow up story on an article in the local newspaper about the Upper McKell Park wedding. I was an observer of the filming of the interview between a journalist and B and W. We look happy, particularly B. W always had a constrained look on his face. He is wearing a t-shirt, on it the words: 'WE ARE ALL ALIVE'. I felt it was significant that he wore this t-shirt on the day he would be featured in a television program. I do not know from where he acquired the t-shirt but the words appear to me to symbolise the plight of homeless people, both from the perspective of how the general public might view them – less than 'normal, the 'other', or not see them at all – as well as how they might see themselves. The words may provide evidence that they have insight into how they would most likely generally be perceived and the t-shirt was a strong statement about them as being as 'alive' as anyone else."

(Reflection, April 2016)

I regard the above photograph (Fig. 7) with an overlay of sadness given W had died and B was now living alone. At the time of the taking of this photograph B and W had not long been married and appeared to be very happy. From my reflection, the wearing of the t-shirt declaring "We Are All Alive" supports the evidence that the couple did not see themselves as just part of a homeless community with a stereotyped identity, but that they were individuals in control of their lives. The wording also challenged the usual 'invisibility' that they endured. Further, it also seems to be a declaration to acknowledge that W, at least, realised what many in the general community might think of them. In this apparent protest, his t-shirt shouted loud and clear that they were as human as everybody else.

7.2. *Looking back…looking forward*

A researcher has the ability to reflect back on the research whilst simultaneously looking forward. Likewise, the participants of research have this ability as well. I believe I was handed the gift of being given permission to enter a very private existence and observe the ordinary, and the extremely personal moments, as well as listen to painful and poignant aspects of the lives of these individuals. In the course of the study, I reflected back to the past lives of the participants, examined their present existence, and surmised their future opportunities.

Barbour (2014, p. 22) states "sometimes apparent contradictions surface not in the context of an individual's account, but in relation to two competing accounts of the same event." I found that B and W presented to me an explanation of their world that was indeed different to what the 'outside community' was seeing. I had much more insight into the reality of their lives, and what they perceived as their identity. I also saw the barriers this community endured, traversing concerns, and whilst trying to arrive at a means to improve their plight.

7.2.1. Links to previous research

The current findings have specific links to previous research and suggest further work that may lead to answers and solutions to the issues faced by homeless/houseless people. The future research opportunities extend to the day-by-day lived experience, as well as an examination of the issues facing a person who is homeless/houseless.

McNaughton's 2006 paper (Agency, Structure and Biography: Charting Transitions Through Homelessness in Late Modernity) describes a qualitative longitudinal study that assesses 28 participants and their life stories and opinions about what has impacted on them. Like B and W, whilst the participants could list what was likely to be the sequence of events that led to homelessness, they did not link these directly to their own circumstances. McNaughton (2006, p. 150) concluded that:

> The value that research of this kind will have in the future is to continue to develop understandings of the processes that occur as people negotiate with their life chances, inequality and opportunity in late modernity, and to 'pull together' gaps between lives as talked about and lives as lived, so that public policy and responses to inequality can be based on an accurate understanding of these issues.

Therefore, it can be seen that an increased number of qualitative studies of lives lived, in both the homeless and houseless domains, would serve to increase the ability of the general public to increase understanding about the area, as well as policy makers to produce meaningful goals for this sector (Marshall & Rossman 2006). In my view, the reliance of governments on narrow definitions for homelessness, and that the homeless are a homogenised group, have seen some policy applications that appear to be inappropriate to sections of the homeless population. This belief was better understood when the data was analysed in the current study.

Cameron Parsell, a Queensland academic, has conducted a number of research projects on the impact of homelessness. He has, for example, provided an informative view on the identity of homeless people. My

conversations with B and W revealed that they had a different view about their lives than most people in the Brooklyn and wider community might have, for example, they believed they were houseless and not homeless. It appears that the findings of such previous research have not penetrated the minds of the general society because age-old preconceived ideas and stigma against homeless people persist, and homelessness still holds the stereotype of the homeless being seen as other than human. Therefore, further research on the subject of the identity of homeless people should assist to change the stereotype.

Pederson, Anderson and Curtis (2012) undertook research into social relationships and isolation in marginalised groups, and arrived at the conclusion (p. 855) that it is important to continue to work on:

> …improving the social wellbeing of socially marginalized people, regardless of their degree of social marginalization and regardless of whether improving their social wellbeing means re-establishing contact with family members or giving priority to 'loner time'.

The long-term nature of the homeless state, which was occupied by B and W, was not completely understood and so any policy development would not be well informed. Once more, work in this area needs to be ongoing if adequate gains are to be made to improve wellbeing of homeless individuals.

Another matter of concern is the attitudes about homelessness. Research has been conducted by Batterham, Hollows and Kolar and they state (2011, p. 75) "…little research has been undertaken on community attitudes to homelessness." Their findings revealed a mixture of attitudes regarding who was responsible, with the overriding recommendation that research on this topic be regularly undertaken. Similarly, I encourage further and consistent work in the area of attitudes towards those who occupy the homeless space so that the true picture of people who are homeless can be revealed.

Gender studies in the area of homelessness are also of great interest and there has been some research undertaken on the subject. The main reason women become homeless is related to the issue of domestic violence. Gender-based

violence is addressed by Watson (2013) with the premise that failing to look at gender in relation to homelessness leads to an inaccurate picture of the homeless problem. Another view is expressed by Oberin and Mitra-Kahn (2013, p. 15), who concurred that gender-based violence was the main reason women become homeless. They focus on prevention. From another perspective Tully (1997), who had completed research examining women and their connections in society, believes that more studies looking at social disconnection in homeless women who often experience violence would be valuable. It is clear much more research needs to be attempted to provide a clearer picture of this issue and to suggest more appropriate interventions at both the individual and community level.

The aforementioned research significantly relates to the lives of B and her husband with regard to concerns about falling into homelessness, identity issues, attitudes and violence. These matters are constantly revisited in homelessness literature and further research would assist to confront the aforementioned inherent barriers faced in homelessness and to overcoming the negative fallout stigma creates.

7.3. Has the question been answered?

It is my contention that the question (*What is the nature of the lived experience of one woman living in a houseless community?)* has been answered. The nature of the lived experience of the participant was closely examined, and the research methodology of the study produced a comprehensive picture of the lives lived in a cave. I believe I have described the nature of the lived experience and, utilising a dialogical narrative inquiry approach, thoroughly analysed the data to produce conclusions, as well as recommendations for the way forward. My research has added to the body of knowledge in that it looked very deeply into chronic homelessness, discovered more emphasis needs to be paid to the notion of being ‘houseless’, and attempted to define the manner in which B approached her world. Participation in the study provided B and W with a voice. The many interactions with the couple enabled the researcher to

observe their activities of daily living as cave-dwellers, attend significant occasions, and develop a meaningful relationship with B.

McNaughton (2008, p. 138), in relation to homelessness, purports "…(individuals) had had very real experiences of intense social, material, and physical deprivation, of inequality, marginality, poverty, vulnerability, and intensely traumatic incidents in their lives, and had to consolidate this within their life story, and their identity…". It was usually a combination of these categories that led to the lessening of a person's ability to seek accommodation and stay housed. B and W described in detail their early lives and how they had transcended into homelessness. Both had difficult upbringings, and by a series of events in their homeless lives had transitioned into an existence of resilience and survival. Both had experienced traumatic happenings after becoming homeless. However, after their move into a cave together, they were able to regroup in relation to their lives, and collectively show to me, the observer, as well as anyone who was watching them as they went about their daily lives, that their 'stage' was a life in a home that fitted any definition of a home in society. The belief that they had a 'home' is a major part of the essence of the nature of this lived experience.

7.4. Choice: power, control and influence

Marsh and Kennett (1999, p. 4) ask the question "…is homelessness a product of individual choice, and therefore best treated as an individual responsibility, or are the causes structural and consequently individuals should not be held responsible for their circumstances?" This goes also to the issue of 'governmentality' (Bullen 2010) and how the homeless are regarded from a bureaucratic point of view. To give the individual person the blame for his or her homelessness moves responsibility (and perhaps the obligation to alleviate the issues surrounding the plight of the homeless) away from the government and into the realm of the homeless person to solve. Falzon (2011) states:

> Our problem in Australia is not the 'idleness of the poor', as perniciously

> proposed by welfare-bashers of all political stripes. Our problem is inequality. This is a social question, not a behavioural one. We do irreparable harm when we turn it into a question of individual behaviour, blaming people for their own poverty, as is so often the case with people who are homeless or in jail because of society's failure to provide them with opportunities and nurture their talents.

In terms of the current effectiveness of policies to enable the homeless to move from disadvantage into housing, it is my view that governments do not place enough resources into building more social and affordable housing despite policies that might indicate otherwise. And the support services are not always as adequate as they need to be to ensure success even if a person is able to be housed.

From my initial contact with B and her husband, they appeared to be proud of their cave and the life they led in the Brooklyn area. They expressed no desire to alter their circumstances. This attitude has been observed in other homeless people (Johnson, Gronda & Coutts 2008). Whilst deeper examination may have discovered that homelessness was not an existence they really wanted to live into the future, I never saw anything in B other than that she believed in her future living in the cave in Brooklyn. The husband and wife both claimed they were not 'homeless', merely 'houseless' and they did not acknowledge that they were without choice in relation to access to services and other necessities. Parsell and Parsell (2012, p. 420) purport "there is a long-standing assumption that homelessness can be a personally chosen state." Further, Parsell (2010b) surmises, being homeless, and in the case of B and W, houseless, was not a comment on who they were, it was a structural choice separate from how they saw themselves.

As I have previously highlighted, Goffman (1963) believes that an individual is able to live in a certain (and maybe chosen) manner that he or she knows does not meet the usual 'standards' or mores of a general population, and does not feel compelled to alter the circumstances. The person appears to have a solid belief in his or her identity and is convinced the 'choices' made are justified and that others could be questioned on their life choices.

Goffman (1963, p. 21) also says that "…the person with a shameful differentness can break with what is called reality, and obstinately attempts to employ an unconventional interpretation of the character of his social identity." The husband of B displays the characteristics that Goffman describes. Perhaps his life in a cave was how W truly saw his position in society, or he may have projected to the general community what he believes they want to see. B appeared to concur with this attitude. Belcher (2014, p. 372) explains "life chances" by saying "…the term refers to people's opportunity to realise their lifestyle choices, which are often assumed to differ according to their social class." I did not observe that B and W consciously selected where they lived and the way they conducted their lives according to a reference to social class. It seemed that whilst B lived with W she was influenced and incorporated into the reality he constructed. On many occasions she was overshadowed in the informal interviews by the opinion of her husband. The impression was conveyed that they both 'chose' to live the lifestyle they did.

Moreover, the research I had undertaken was a vehicle to enable B and W to make their views known. It gave them a voice. Zufferey (c. 2004) states:

> The questions about how the voices of people who are homeless are represented, how they are articulated and expressed and how and in what ways homeless people give voice to their concerns and interests remain important considerations when developing programs to respond to homelessness.

Keylon (1993, p. 67) argues that "…it is necessary for the homeless to have an identity of self-worth." This is a suggestion from her research that had investigated homelessness, and its stigmas, and the importance of believing life had value. From the perspective of B and W, they appeared to have an identity that reflected they felt they were living a life that was positive, that they had self-worth and that they were in control of their future.

7.5. Recommendations

The question needs to be asked: Who should pay attention to this research?

As I have already noted, whilst policies do exist, the problems relating to homelessness persist. The numbers have not declined. The 2016 Census (conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics) reported that the total number of homeless people in Australia had "…increased 13.7 per cent over the last five years" to 116,427 people.

Some areas in the three levels of government in Australia (local, state, federal) do not participate in the needed problem-solving for homelessness as it exists in their jurisdictions; sometimes the government entity attempts to merely remove the homeless from a site without providing housing and service options (I have been witness to this but am unable to enlarge further). Dozens of homeless people occupied Martin Place, Sydney, for months in 2017 in tents, and other infrastructure was created, for example, a 24-hour kitchen. This was to send a message to government that there was insufficient effort to house them. The ABC reporter, Lucy McNally (2017) reported that "…a City of Sydney representative walked through (the camp) handing out a letter to the homeless describing the camp as a 'public nuisance'." McNally also quoted (24 June, 2017) a spokesperson for the group, who stated, in the face of being moved on by officials, that "…the dismantling of the camp would not stop the community setting up elsewhere" and that "…this problem is actually the responsibility of the collective governments including councils, state and federal." On the same issue, SBS reporter Peggy Giakoumelos (2017) reported on the move by the New South Wales State government to change laws, so that the people who persisted with camping in Martin Place could be moved off the precinct. Following the removal of the homeless camp in June, a number of people had moved back. Giakoumelos further states (8 August, 2017) that this had resulted "…in tensions between the state government and Sydney mayor…, who the government accuses of not doing enough to move people on." The situation did not have a clear solution so the NSW Parliament enacted laws to allow homeless individuals to be moved on. There was no repatriation to accommodation despite the need, however, the government had arranged for the Wayside Chapel, Sydney, to provide an after-hours service for homeless people to access.

These, and other examples, highlighted the ongoing issue of lack of effective routine commitment to assisting homeless people unless there was a crisis. Justice Connect (2 August, 2016) stated that "when it comes to homelessness, out of sight should not be out of mind." A spokesperson added (2016) "better access to more affordable housing and community support is the solution." Therefore, those who should take notice of this, and other research on the subject of the homeless dilemma, are those who are in a position to make a difference. These people could include, Members of Parliament, Councillors in Local Government and people working in the sector.

Another question that needs to be asked is: Can we end long-term homelessness? The answer is most definitely in the affirmative. However, the process is one that will need government commitment over a long period of time, in addition to policies that reflect the different types of homelessness and the problems to be faced. The voice of the homeless needs to be heard and taken into account. Watson (1999, p. 94) purports that:

> For all forms of homelessness, there are a range of solutions and approaches…these include an extended provision of low-cost accommodation in different forms of social or public housing, (and) a stronger requirement on local authorities to carry out their responsibilities to homeless people…

Further:

> The majority of these solutions require expenditure on the part of governments and a commitment at local and central government to properly combating extensive levels of homelessness in…society.

It is clear that each of the three levels of government must commit to being part of a proactive approach to effectively assist homeless people to alleviate the challenges in their lives.

7.5.1. Adding definitions - houselessness

From my research data, it can clearly be seen that the short period of time I

spent observing lived experience was merely a ‘drop in the ocean’ of a lifetime of trauma and difficulties for homeless people trying to fit in to what we might call ‘general society’. Therefore, it can be said that some individuals may experience an almost life-long experience of homelessness. Catherine Robinson (2012, p. 21) calls this a long-term or a lifetime trajectory and states:

> As I have argued (Robinson 2003) such experiences of homelessness (of these homeless individuals) may best be understood not in terms of a single stretch of homelessness that persists for a long time, but as a life path punctuated by multiple iterations of homelessness which take different forms and persist for different time spans at different periods through a person’s life.

Parsell (2011, p. 21) maintains the argument that “…there is no agreed upon definition as to what constitutes long-term homelessness.” Further, he states (2014, p. 234) that “…chronic homelessness is (often) conflated with complex needs…” as almost a truism. These comments support the need for more research to be undertaken to look specifically at long-term homelessness so that some of the assumptions made about it could be challenged. The current study has delved into an area of chronic homelessness that has a dearth of recorded information – living long-term in a cave. In observing and recording the lived experiences of B and W, the researcher has not only added to knowledge about chronic homelessness but, as has been stated, has also provided a voice for the participants. B and W, whilst being defined as homeless, were, in reality, houseless. The narrow view when defining what it means to be without what is usually considered to be accommodation – a house - reinforces the homogenous view of people considered to be homeless. It also reinforces the stigma attached to these people. And it aids in entrenching their marginalisation and exclusion. As such, in line with my research findings, I strongly advocate for the need for an additional definition when considering homelessness, and policy directions that are designed to help the, especially, chronically homeless. This definition would be that of ‘houselessness’.

7.5.2. Aiding policy development

Currently, in my view, government policies (as separate to politics) that seek to address the issues associated with homelessness do not appear to adequately understand the true nature and diversity of what homelessness is actually about. In other words, the policies need to encompass all types of homelessness and not just be a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Anglicare Victoria (2019) state:

> How bad does a situation need to get before governments realise that this country has a homeless crisis (?)…for our governments it remains an unexplainable policy ambivalence of national proportions.

It seems some of the policies were, and are, created as reactions to media stories, resulting in largely ineffective plans for people who are homeless. As such, there is an obvious need to set the parameters of what defines a social problem. Homelessness has had ebbs and flows of community/government attention over the decades. For example, Main (1994) examined 1980s homelessness, and its causes, and made a number of interesting observations (more of his work will be discussed later in this chapter), one of them relating to defining what the problem actually is and how it becomes generally accepted as something that needs to be addressed. He stated (1994, p. 7):

> …homelessness became defined as a social problem through an ongoing process by which some phenomena become thought of as social problems while others not…It is during the phase of emergence (as a social problem), when the public first become aware of a problem, and legitimization, when a particular explanation of a problem becomes generally accepted, that publications can play a particularly strong role in the career of a social problem.

Main (1994) purports that only when media (and published books are included) expose what may be a social problem, it is then that a government reaction usually occurs to proffer a solution to the problem. It is at this point, when there is the emergence of a 'social problem', that government feels there is an imperative to solve it. Policies are often developed following such a discovery. Homelessness appears to have fallen into this process – it is no different today than it was in the last part of the twentieth century. The homeless are thus

victims of popular opinion and their individual attributes and issues are lost.

The discussion of governmentality in this thesis reflects in this conversation because of the ability of governments to alter to whom or to what they attribute the 'blame' for homelessness. Over time the blame for the existence has changed – it has either been a structural blame (that is, lack of housing), or personal reasons have been said to be the blame for the existence of homelessness (Bullen, 2010). I argue that to 'blame' either structural reasons or alleged personal failures is not effective. With every person who has become homeless there will be a unique set of circumstances that has contributed to the situation. Therefore, each case of homelessness is different, and there is nothing to be gained by governments viewing all homelessness as the same, to the exclusion of looking at these individual circumstances. Zufferey and Kerr (2010, p. 351) support this argument with their comment "the experience of homelessness is not homogenous, because the stories of individual lives offer a multiplicity of interrelated, contradictory and changing meanings." In fact, it is uninformed to believe that placing such blame is the bedrock upon which good policy can be built. Each case must be dealt with on its own merits because of the huge variation in how a person has become homeless in the first place. This approach is essential to adequately addressing the issues facing homeless people.

To revisit the example of the mass demonstration in Martin Place, Sydney, in 2017, by homeless people about their lack of accommodation, this had resulted in many comments about the public area being used to erect tents and serve food. In the Sydney Morning Herald (8 August, 2017), Cameron Parsell criticised the reaction of authorities in relation to the 'problem'. Being alarmed at the offer to the homeless of a "quick fix" he stated:

> Our leaders lament the recalcitrant homeless for not taking up the kind offers of homeless accommodation. The argument goes: they are without shelter, so any shelter will do; not taking offers of shelter means that they are choosing homelessness. Once we have rationalised their homelessness as a choice, we can then gloss over the problems with our housing systems and forcibly remove the problem from our view. Although popular, this type of reasoning ignores why people do not want

> to live in homeless accommodation. People reject homeless accommodation because it does not provide them with the critical elements of a home, where we can control the day-to-day functioning of our lives.

Similar to my very naïve entry into the homelessness research domain, a lack of accurate understanding about what it is the homeless require, and policy development from this, is destined to lead to failure if the underlying issues are not taken into account. This policy development should cover a wide portfolio area and not merely housing. Coupled with the shift from blaming the structures (predominantly housing, employment and the provision of social services) that influenced the move of people into homelessness, to blaming the homeless person or family themselves, there are the stubborn statistics that show no appreciable difference in the homeless numbers. As Kennett (1999, p. 49) reiterates "in both social and urban policy the emphasis is on reducing public services and stressing the role of agencies alternative to local government, and the need for a mix of private, not-for-profit voluntary inputs." Anglicare Victoria (2019) argues:

> The neglect by government, state and federal, for the best part of two decades has created over-crowded emergency housing wait rooms, compromised and unsafe living arrangements, and no access to affordable rents for thousands on a lower income. Our psyche has developed a strange tolerance for the vision of rough sleepers on our streets…on any scale, this is our nation's greatest social issue to resolve.

Unfortunately, there has been no real leap in government policy to combat the plight of the homeless; even the Rudd Federal Government (2007-2010) focus on homelessness made very few inroads into cutting the numbers. Bullen (2013, p. 5) states that "…(despite Prime Minister Rudd's government policies) much more will need to be done if the total number of people experiencing homelessness is to be reduced."

With regard to the need for research to tackle the challenges of homelessness, Gaetz (2010, p. 32) argues:

> "Research should have an impact on decision-making in government through providing solid evidence that informs policy and practice.

> Strategic planning and program development within the non-profit sector should be rooted in an evidence-based approach. Good research deepens our understanding of the issues, challenges our assumptions, and points to effective solutions. Research can and should play a vital role in debates about solutions to homelessness.

Whilst there is research on the issue, more meaningful investigations that encompasses the direct involvement of homeless people are needed, the research needs to be reader-friendly, so that it can and, therefore, will be used for policy development. This belief underpins my determination to write the current document in narrative non-fiction format, including the voices of the participants, and in a manner so that policy-makers will want to scrutinise the contents.

Part of the difficulty with formulating policies in the housing sphere, and other areas relating to homelessness, is the constant review in defining what exactly homelessness is, and how it originates. Watson (1999, p. 84) states:

> Meanings are not fixed but are continually contested, formed and reformed in the context of political, social, cultural and economic struggles. This is particularly true for homelessness where homeless groups must continually struggle to be incorporated into policy discourses in order to have their needs met.

It can be seen that further work needs to be undertaken to improve policy development associated with homelessness and its issues.

Another recommendation from the current study is the need to increase research on the link between childhood trauma and homelessness. Brandt (2017) argues “whether you witnessed or experienced violence as a child or your caretakers emotionally or physically neglected you, when you grow up in a traumatizing environment you are likely to still show signs of that trauma.” As has been stated, many homeless people have experienced early life trauma. B is an example of this, and somehow managed to show resilience in a hostile environment. Banyard (1995, p. 890) says:

> Many (homeless women) displayed remarkable skill and creativity in dealing with daily stress. Programs and policies must be developed that

> more adequately build on such strengths while also providing much needed attention to those who turn to more detrimental coping strategies such as using alcohol or drugs.

There are a number of examples of strategies designed to assist people who have experienced abuse. Julia Derham and Michelle Francis, who work with socially excluded homeless people, providing a 'trauma informed' case management model, state that (2012, p. 9):

> The case work team has…consciously sought to avoid responding in a way that replicates abusive family dynamics and to always be prepared to meet the participant where they are at. The therapeutic approach has aimed to create a safe dynamic where past experiences are challenged and in doing this provide an opportunity to form new narratives.

Further, a document has been created outlining the optimum procedure for dealing with the homeless in public spaces. The 'Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places' (2013) was developed giving regard to the special circumstances that officials often find themselves in when dealing with matters concerning the homeless. It is my opinion that the document is well developed and, if utilised, would assist personnel to approach homeless people in public places in a respectful and appropriate manner. It is true to say that many workers who deal with homeless people in public places most likely have no knowledge that such a document exists.

Whilst some strategies have been implemented to assist homeless people, the current study illustrates a number of areas that have thus far been inadequately assessed and acted upon. The importance of this thesis to the development of policy will lie with its information concerning the chronically homeless, and the unique nature of the lived experience of a married couple residing in a cave.

7.5.3. Addressing governmentality

The issue of how governments decide to view the homeless condition will very much determine the content and application of policy. As already mentioned, Jane Bullen (2010) focussed her thesis on the actions of governments and what

was allocated responsibility for the occurrence of homelessness. Farrugia and Gerrard (2013, p. 4) state:

> We…live within a social and political context that encourages people to understand the things that happen to them as personal, individual problems, rather than socially and systemically produced issues, resulting in the stigmatisation and stereotyping that those who experience homelessness often contend with on a daily basis.

Changes in the determination of responsibility – from societal factors to those of individual circumstances – was pivotal in policy development. Moving the risk from governments and businesses to the individual (Kennett 1999) changed the goal posts and Kennett (1999, p. 45) states "this reorientation is an indication that the nature and significance of the social relations of welfare change over time as does the relationship between the individual and the state." The apportioning of responsibility for the homeless condition would need to be reviewed.

7.5.4. Assessing quality of life

In relation to the current study, it is difficult to achieve a measurement in quality of life from a subjective perspective. It is my opinion that an observer who has a different life experience would be very likely to decide the quality of life for homeless people was poor judging by what was seen. This is an objective view and so not informed in relation to how the homeless see themselves. As previously mentioned in Chapter Five, most homeless people see themselves as a different entity than how society see them.

Directly capturing the stories and narrations of the homeless in an ongoing manner will be important to the assessment of quality of life. Daiute (2014, p.4) states "…beyond being a discursive form, narrating is a basic, necessary, and fascinating human activity." As such, narrative can be used to capture the intrinsic information about many subjects, including how a life is lived. By utilising the actual voices of the homeless/houseless individuals (and the people who are vitally involved in their lives), it should be possible to gain an

understanding of the lived experience in order to provide an estimation of the quality of the lives. Daiute (p. 10) argues "…narrative research serves to enter previously excluded voices in a broader public forum." However, in the case of B and W, a true indication of life quality proved to be very challenging given their unwavering opinions about their lives. B and her husband were given the opportunity to have their voices heard and, whilst a number of non-theretofore aspects were discovered, the determination of the quality of life of B remains unknown. The fact the couple lived in a cave, and dealt with the wider world and its challenges from this perspective, was not something they acknowledged as a problem.

Suffering is an aspect of the lives of many homeless people that is largely invisible to the general community. Robinson (2011, p. 136) explains that in the phenomenon of suffering there is "…limited representation of and engagement with the hurt of homelessness." She also states (p. 139) that suffering is "…silenced and subsumed in definitions of homelessness." Suffering for B was described when her fiancé died, and it was observed when W died. I witnessed B exhibit great resilience at the time of W's illness, death and funeral.

There is a great need for more clinical neuropsychological assessment of the homeless, specifically in relation to the high incidence of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and dementia (Alzheimer's Australia 2016). Main (1994, p. iii) states "disabilities common among the homeless are granted only secondary importance." He goes on to say (p. iii) that "personal disabilities among the homeless have more explanatory power than the structural account allows." Many of the disabilities suffered by homeless people are the result of a traumatic event to the head that results in an ABI. Other disabilities include types of mental health disorders, alcohol and substance abuse; these can, and do, contribute to acquiring a brain injury. Alzheimer's Australia (2016, p. 2) states:

> Homeless people are not routinely assessed for cognitive impairment and dementia. Cognitive impairment and dementia among homeless people often co-exist with, are compounded by, and are difficult to distinguish from, other issues such as mental health problems, traumatic

brain injury, and substance abuse.

Unfortunately, homeless people are currently not given much consideration for physical ailments they might have (Main, 1994). The stereotype generally overwhelms the picture of homelessness. With a greater ability to test the health (mental or otherwise) of the homeless, a more accurate estimation of the degree of disability in homelessness could be had, and this may reduce the stigma attached to these people (Snow, Anderson & Koegel 1994) and allow for appropriate intervention and treatment for them individually.

In relation to a study on schizophrenia in the homeless community, and work with psychiatric outreach, Buhrich, Hodder and Teeson (2003, p. 56) state:

> The fact that the psychiatrist had difficulty in locating about one third of participants (in the study) referred to him by a research officer indicates that it is difficult for mental health professionals to stay in touch with refuge residents, many of whom are likely to have a diagnosis of schizophrenia. The implication for service planning is that there needs to be a flexible and mobile outreach service, so that clients in need can be located rather than expecting the client to keep an appointment at the time and place that suits the health professional.

The suggestion concerning mental health services could be applied across the broad number of services that homeless people might need. For example, in relation to the problem W had with his colonoscopy preparation, realistic general health care would be a most important service provision that needs more flexibility when dealing with homeless individuals.

Another area important to comment upon is whether B and her husband possessed dignity (meaning an elevation of self to a feeling of satisfaction) and whether they were treated with dignity. Miller and Keys (2001) speak of dignity by arguing that the presence or absence of dignity is a very significant aspect to consider when trying to comprehend life as a homeless person. They conducted research that aimed to estimate the importance of dignity in lives that were attempting to cope with being homeless, and the manner in which the homeless person might access services or try to exit homelessness if they possessed dignity.

Parsell (2008, p. 9) states:

> I recognise that an exclusive focus on traumatic experiences prior to homelessness, or alcohol and substance misuse during homelessness may have a number of unintentional affects. These could include the potential to ignore structural considerations, exonerating Governments of their responsibility to ensure access to affordable housing; making a pathology of people who are homeless; or portraying them as responsible for their homelessness.

The focus on deviant behaviour, as opposed to a more holistic view of the individual, will not promote a feeling of self-worth. Miller and Keys (2001) conclude that it was likely that possessing dignity did help with meaningful approaches to service providers. I believe B and W possessed a kind of dignity. The manner in which they spoke about their lives in the cave they occupied, and the method of accessing the services and essentials they needed, was self-assured and was exhibited to me with some pride in such acquisitions. I believe that they did not want to reside anywhere else than the cave on the headland, and so they showed dignity in the explanations offered to support the desire to stay where they were. They appeared to be comfortable in their decision to conduct their lives in this way. More work on the area of dignity in the homeless population would be helpful; poor uptake of services is an ongoing issue in many places, as is movement out of homelessness where the person desired to change their life but did not take up the opportunities to do so (Parsell, Clarke & Vorsina 2019). The issue of dignity, and how homeless people felt about approaching entities for help, is an important consideration.

7.5.5. Increasing social housing – is this the answer?

The word ‘homeless’ gives the immediate impression of having no home. In reality, this impression could mean that they have no ‘house’. Johnstone et al. (2015, p.1) state that “the homeless are a vulnerable population…those experiencing homelessness not only experience personal and economic hardship, they also frequently face discrimination and exclusion because of their

housing status."

It is my experience that a number of people working in the homeless sector firmly believe that the aim of all the work in this area should be to 'end' homelessness (Reynolds 2014). For many homeless individuals this will be true, and it will work if sufficient effort is given to assist the person to succeed. Wylie believes that by a process of intensive work homeless people will be re-housed in a traditional home and she states (2012, p. 28):

> …the process of settling into housing after years of homelessness is different for every one and many program participants still face challenges on their journeys from homelessness. However,…with stable housing and a focus towards healing and social inclusion, it is possible to write a new story.

Murphy et al. (2011, p. 42) argue "…the ability to sustain affordable, long-term housing recurred often as a key element of people's fears about their future."

Suzi James-Nevell (2012, p. 20), social inclusion worker, supports the view that to assist the homeless person out of their disadvantage is multifaceted and that:

> The transition is not easy but it is possible. The strength of relationship based work and the belief that change is possible, cannot be underestimated. The importance of time, resources and intensive case management support is essential, as is a flexible and holistic approach that focuses on the individual.

A policy and research officer for Homelessness Australia, Travis Gilbert (2012), believes that harm reduction coupled with housing is a preferred policy to assist homeless people. There are many chronically homeless people who have a range of medical and cognitive difficulties and/or alcohol and drug dependencies, who will need specific interventions and support to enable them to live independently. Falzon (2011) agrees:

> …we must, as a nation, address the massive shortfall in social housing in order to meet these targets (the Federal Government homeless strategy to halve homelessness by 2020). We must also comprehensively address the national crisis in mental health.

With relation to the belief that it is cheaper if a homeless person is housed rather than 'supported' in homelessness, Parsell, Petersen and Culhane (2016) maintain the use of cost-offset projects to assist homeless people out of their homeless state. They believe that it can be shown that to house a homeless person will save money for governments in a number of services provision areas, these including law enforcement, justice, health care (both general and mental health), and in services designed for homeless people. Further, Parsell and Marston (2012) discuss the alleviation of poverty, as well as the provision of housing as a means to prevent homelessness. In terms of poverty, a new report released in February 2020, undertaken by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the University of New South Wales (UNSW), has reported (p. 9) that "13.6 per cent of (Australians)…,after taking account their housing costs", have been determined to be living below the poverty line. This is 3.24 million citizens. In relation to this policy release, SBS News (2020) announced "one in eight Australian adults and one in six children are living in poverty…" which translates to 774,000 children. As has been already been described, poverty is one of the key indicators of the risk to become homeless.

In discussing the importance of an adequate living area, Healey-Ogden and Austin (2010, p. 88) state "dwelling opens people to well-being in four significant spaces: play space, creative space, nature's space, and spiritual space." In summary, access to social housing is extremely important in any plan to reduce the number (and suffering) of homeless people.

7.6. Reflecting further

As previously discussed, the current study recognised a great need to undertake further research in a number of vital areas. One such area was the paucity of research concerning female homeless people. There has been some work on assisting women out of homelessness, for example, Combs (2012, p. iv) conducted research pertaining to how women may overcome their homelessness and identified four themes "(a) (the) obtain(ing of) support, (b) development of self-confidence, (c) (the creation of) a structured daily routine,

and (d) (the) ability to love oneself." As such, they recommended that the themes could be adopted for future interventions and to advise a "…new mental health model to use for future research studies." Further, they recommended to look more closely at wider gender issues in this space. Banyard (1995, p. 873) states "Homeless women are an understudied group within the stress and coping field." In order for accurate policy to be created this paucity of research needs to be addressed.

To mention choice again, this is yet another subject that encourages discussion in homelessness expert circles, where more research should be undertaken. Many people who specialise in homeless issues and who work closely with homeless people are adamant that nobody would 'choose' to be homeless. I agree that this is largely true for the majority of homeless individuals. In saying they 'choose' to be homeless the person may be saying this because they feel this is what the asker wants to hear, or they are saying it as a mechanism to promote self-worth. However, there is a small percentage of the homeless who do choose to live their lives in an alternate fashion. I believe B and W are in this small percentage. As already described, as I witnessed their day-to-day living they gave the appearance of being happy to reside in a cave, and, as has been described, on many occasions they declared that they did not have a house, as such, but they did have a home, so they felt they were merely houseless. Parsell and Parsell (2012, p. 420) substantiates this when they say "rarely is it adequately explained…what choosing homelessness means and how people who are homeless make sense of their choices." Of note, B only moved out of the cave after W died, when she felt very insecure being alone in the cave.

Media contributions about the homeless also deserve another mention. So often, the only time homeless people are represented is in a negative fashion. As such, it would be beneficial to portray people of significant disadvantage in a positive and constructive way, so that, regarding the usual stereotype they carried, an attempt at dispelling this could be made. Forte (2002) proffers, in his examination of media and other information technology, negativity and the role of social workers to attempt to reverse this impression (and assist the increase in provision of housing), that a "social constructionist" approach (pp.

135-137) be adopted. His study concluded that social workers (2002, p. 152):

> …can cultivate their ability to take the role of all claims makers (those expressing opinions about homeless people), including those unsympathetic to the homeless, and lead efforts to construct societies characterised by social awareness, responsibility, and compassion."

Thus this work could be expanded upon in terms of the practice of social work (Marshall & Rossman 2006). With his research on the causes of homelessness years before, Main (1994, p. 4) said "…homeless policy had overemphasized rapid provision of permanent housing, and had underemphasized treatment of disabilities amongst homeless families." Therefore, more research on the phenomenon of disability in the homeless population must be undertaken, in order to increase the understanding about why people become homeless and why they seem to stay there, particularly if they are homeless for an extended period of time and are deemed to be chronically homeless.

Further to media and the portrayal of the homeless, Zufferey and Chung (2006, p. 33) state that "the media both constitutes and reflects political and cultural debates" and that:

> …print media representations of social issues, including homelessness, directly and indirectly influence public attitudes (and politicians) and can function to advocate for changes as well as support existing unequal power relations.

Housing, as an area of great undersupply, could be discussed within media opportunities, however, media is rarely utilised to pressure policy makers in this direction. The same could be said for the complex causes of homelessness, as well as the often simple ways to address a number of the challenges faced. Media use to improve general knowledge about the issue of homelessness, and not just the crises, would be very beneficial.

Access to services is difficult both from the provision of these services as well as the willingness or ability of the homeless person to make contact with a service provider (Moore, Manias & Gerdtz 2011). Walter et al. (2015, p. 333) state:

> Gaining entry to homeless services typically requires individuals to self-identify as homeless, however, this label may be at odds with how individuals see themselves. Furthermore, because of the considerable stigma attached to homelessness, individuals' self-categorization has potentially important implications for their well-being and for whether they engage with homeless services in order to obtain housing and psychosocial outcomes.

There is also a need to focus on the skill sets of practitioners who are endeavouring to assist the homeless with their needs. Robinson (2012, p. 21) argues that "…complex trauma is central to repeat experiences of homelessness and that currently homelessness and mainstream services (for example, housing authorities, police, Centrelink) are under-skilled and under-supported in appropriately responding (to the homeless)."

Addressing the need to increase social inclusion is also of significance. Giddens (2009) speaks of social exclusion, that he defines (p. 498) as "…ways in which individuals may become cut off from full involvement in the wider society." He describes this as being excluded or excluding oneself, and will affect employment, income, services and relationships. Better policy development would assist the inclusion of homeless people by giving them a voice, both in the policy making as well as the implementation. Social capital would thus be enhanced.

7.6.1. Attributes of a chameleon

Apart from the many informative pieces of data that emerged over the months of my data collection, I found the most intriguing aspect was the discovery of the 'chameleon-like' personality of B. There were many examples of B exhibiting this persona in the course of her day, and her decision-making with regard to the challenges she faced. The enigmatic persona of B somehow existed within the apparent chaos of her life and reinforced the 'other' in which she lived. B wanted to be a participant in such a study as mine. Like the message on the t-shirt of W ('We Are All Alive') seen in Fig 7, she wanted society to know she

was also ‘alive’. The study made her a visible entity. It not only witnessed her emerge as a mortal, it also gave her the impression of being ‘immortal’. The research gave her validation and status. It ‘humanised’ her as a woman, despite the fact she lived in a cave. As the seminal theorist Cooley (1902, p. 16) asserts:

> The self that we develop is not constant, but it undergoes change. Just as the self arises in social interaction, so through social interaction it undergoes modification.

In her creation of herself, and the many contradicting traits, the fact she sought communication with the world outside her homeless community could be seen as enabling the connectivity that is integral to ‘human’-ness. However, whilst it appears that she wanted to connect with people, in her attempts there remained a ‘disconnect’ that was most likely the result of the perceptions of the general community in relation to her homelessness. As such, there existed a connectivity/dis-connectivity dichotomy. Whilst in many ways she desired to tell me about her world, in others she did not wish to be examined. Examples of this were the lack of writing a diary when offered the ability to do so, as well as the lack of providing artwork despite being provided with an art book and good quality crayons. It appeared that B may be playing the victim, but also took a persona of a survivor. This reinforces the ‘chameleon’ interpretation of her as a person. The ability of B to utilise contrasting character traits as she faced her life, emphasised her resilience as she survived much hardship living in the cave.

7.7. Last words

At present, the response to homelessness is an often confused mixture of approaches. The barriers to a proper understanding of homeless/houseless lives, the provision of adequate and accessible services, and the availability of affordable housing may be so wanting that, as McNaughton believed, these disadvantaged and often pre-judged people may remain “trapped at the edge” (2008, p. 2).

In terms of my study of cave dwelling homeless/houseless people adjacent to the village of Brooklyn, I was humbled to have been presented with a unique exposure and one that revealed many aspects of the lived experience of these interesting human beings. I utilised the influential tool, that is narrative, to impart information following my collection of data, that consisted of the past stories of the participants, plus the observations of the present-day activities. Clandinin (2013, p. 17) states:

> Narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honouring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding.

The two outstanding pieces of knowledge that have been revealed in the current research study are the belief that a cave is, indeed, a home (and therefore the term 'houseless' MUST be utilised more often in conversations about 'homeless' people) and that there are very special ways with which to deal with surviving a lifestyle whether you choose it or not.

Clinical neuropsychology as a discipline, is a distinct and specific part of the psychology spectrum. Often confused with clinical psychology by the general population, the neuropsychologist's pathway is one of diagnosing brain dysfunction where there has been illness or trauma (Farmer & Eakman 1995) utilising specialised testing. Such assessments are invaluable in many illness scenarios, and particularly so with those patients who have an acquired brain injury. As has been described, homeless people have a high prevalence of having suffered some sort of brain injury, either before they became homeless or subsequent to becoming homeless. There is a paucity of neuropsychological assessment of such disadvantaged people. It is my view that more access to neuropsychological testing should be provided to people who are homeless. This would provide insight into previously unexplained behaviours, as well set up pathways to appropriate intervention and support (Park & Ingles 2001; Brandt 2017).

Social workers need to be given increased involvement with service access for

the homeless that is parallel to housing (long acknowledged as a panacea to solve the homeless 'problem'). The practice of social work (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) needs to be across a number of disciplines, and include focus on emotional trauma (Goodman, Saxe & Harvey 1991: FEANTSA 2017). Robinson (2012, p. 22) places a great deal of emphasis on the adequate assessment of trauma and states that:

> …understanding how complex trauma is experienced and lived by individuals is essential to understanding how trauma connects to homelessness and to understanding how trauma and homelessness can *both* be responded to through trauma-informed housing and support work and specialist trauma work."

Funston (2012, p. 23) reported that "Trauma-Informed Care may potentially bridge…(a gap in the provision of homelessness services)…by offering a broad generalised service framework applicable to all homeless service types including crisis accommodation, supported housing and *housing first* initiatives."

This brings me to advocacy. Throughout the research experience it was evident that the advocate (JJJ) played a very important role in the lives of the participants. They had known JJJ for many years and she had been in contact/communication with the couple on an almost weekly basis. From early beginnings, where JJJ assisted with improving the nutrition of homeless people in Brooklyn, she established a very close relationship with B and W and became an advocate on their behalf. Advocacy provides a voice for very vulnerable and marginalised individuals, as these people were. It oversees matters to protect the rights of people. Advocacy also ensures that the wishes and opinions of people are included in decision making. JJJ was all of this and more for B and W. When we were engaged in the interview, or in other discussions, JJJ presented to me as an advocate who would always have the best interests of B and W as her main goal.

An excellent example of the role of an advocate is that of the Patient Advocate in nursing. Gerber (2018, p. 55) states that "personal attributes of effective nurse advocates include professional competence, objectivity, flexibility, empathy, self-motivation, accountability, commitment, a sense of responsibility

and strong coping skills." I saw all of these in JJJ, and the manner in which she interacted with, and on behalf of, B and W was admirable.

In my experience with homelessness, there has not been a formalised role such as that of a 'homeless advocate'. Whilst there are groups and individuals who take on an interactive and helpful role with homeless people, I believe that there is a need to increase advocacy for these vulnerable people by creating a role for the homeless similar to that of the nurse advocate for patients in the healthcare setting. Such a structured role could be proactive, caring, empathetic and effective. It would acknowledge the autonomy of the homeless person for whom the advocacy was being undertaken. I observed JJJ respect B and W, preserve their dignity, ask for their permission before undertaking an action on their behalf, listen to their opinions on matters pertinent to their lives and follow the lead in relation to their decisions.

Additionally, further work could be undertaken on the inequality and exclusion that exists in the lives of homeless people (McNaughton 2006). The Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission (2008, p. 13) states that:

> A human rights approach departs from a welfare approach to homelessness by demonstrating that homeless people are not merely objects of charity, seeking help and compassion. Like all Australians, they are individuals who are entitled under international law to protection and promotion of their human rights.

There are many statements about how homeless people should be treated. However, in reality these individuals are largely not provided with the respect they should be, due to a lack of information and understanding about their lives, and the stereotype attached that is consequently very difficult to reverse.

Finally, it is relevant to point out that the undertaking of this research, and its results and revelations, is crucial for future assessment of the homeless/houseless dilemmas. The current research will enable policy writers to thoroughly and accurately investigate the phenomena so that appropriate policies result. Already a number of research projects have been undertaken and completed, and despite very relevant recommendations made in these

studies, much of this valuable work has not been adopted, or given adequate recognition. As such, I felt it to be essential to mention the prior recommendations so that they could be revisited and adopted in a more effective manner. It will take strong leadership, incorporating an ethical approach, resilience and integrity, on the part of the policy makers and implementers to make the required difference in the lives of these very vulnerable people. The research to which I have referred in the current study - on social work, neuropsychology and other areas affecting how homeless people might be better served - needs new focus. It is also hoped that the stereotype which haunts the homeless will be reviewed, and that this stereotype will be removed so that the homeless individual, often 'trapped at the edge' (McNaughton 2008, p.2) due to reasons outside their control, and outside their ability to easily change, will receive a much more empathetic approach to their situation.

7.8. Postscript

As I wrote, read and re-read this document, the overwhelming emotion I had, and still have, is one of extreme poignancy that I had been given the privilege of entering into the lives of these remarkable people, and had been able to spend time with them and record their lives. I have tried to capture the essence of the lived experience in the cave, and in the general community, and with their friends and associates. I endeavoured to do this with as much respect and empathy as is humanly possible. I hope I achieved this principal aim.

B now lives in an apartment in a suburb near Ryde. This dwelling is close to one of her sisters. But far away from the cave.

List of References

Abramsky, S 2013, *The American way of poverty: how the other half still lives*, Nation Books, New York, USA.

Adams, T, Jones, SH & Ellis, C, 2014, *Autoethnography: understanding qualitative research*, Oxford University Press, UK.

Alexander, H 2017, 'Homeless occupying 'Sydney's most prestigious address'', *Sun-Herald*, 15 January, p. 6.

Alzheimer's Australia 2016, *Homelessness and dementia*, discussion paper, Alzheimer's Australia.

Angelou, M 1969, *I know why the caged bird sings*, Random House, USA.

Anglicare Victoria 2019, *Bold thinking needed to tackle crisis of homelessness*, position statement, viewed 19 February 2020, https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/news/bold-thinking-needed-to-tackle-the-crisis-of-homelessness/

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, *Position paper – ABS review of counting the homeless methodology 2011*, cat. no. 2050.0.55.002, ABS, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012, *Information paper – a statistical definition of homelessness* 2012, cat. no. 4922.0, ABS, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *Census reveals a rise in the rate of homelessness in Australia*, media release, 14 March, viewed 19 February 2020, https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/2049.0Media%20Release12016

Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) and University of New South Wales (UNSW) 2018, ACOSS and UNSW *Poverty in Australia 2020, part 1: overview*, viewed 21 February 2020, http://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Poverty-in-Australia-2020_Part-1_Overview.pdf

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2012, *Australia's Health 2012: The thirteenth biennial health report of the AIHW*, Federal Government, Australia.

Banyard, VL 1995, '"Taking another route": daily survival narratives from mothers who are homeless', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, vol.

23, no. 6, pp. 871-91.
Barbour, R 2014, *Introducing qualitative research: a students' guide*, SAGE, London, UK.
Barlass, T 2015, 'Cave man gets heritage view', *The Sun-Herald*, 17 May, p. 16.
Barusch, AS 2012, 'Refining the narrative turn: when does story-telling become research?', *Gerontological Society of America*, 16 November, viewed 20 October 2019, https://scholar.google.com.au/scholar?q=refining=the=narrative=turn&hl=en&as_sdt=0&as_vis+1&oi=scholart
Batterham, D, Hollows, A & Kolar, V 2011, 'Attitudes to homelessness in Australia', *Australian Social Policy Journal*, no. 10, Federal Government, Australia.
Belcher, H 2014, 'Power, politics and health care', in J Germov (ed.), *Second opinion: an introduction to health sociology*, 5th edn, Oxford University Press, Victoria, Australia, pp. 359-387.
Berger, AA 2014, *Media communication research methods: an introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*, 3rd edn, SAGE, California, USA.
Berger, PL 1967, *The sacred canopy: elements of a sociological theory of religion*, Open Road Media, USA.
Berger, P, Berger, B & Kellner, H 1973, *The homeless mind: modernization and consciousness*, Random House, New York, USA.
Berger, PL & Luckmann, T 1966, *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge,* Open Road, USA.
Blix, BH, Hamran, T & Normann, HK 2013, 'Struggles of being and becoming: a dialogical narrative analysis of the life stories of Sami elderly', *Journal of Aging Studies*, vol. 27, pp. 264-275.
Blumer, H 1962, *Social interactionism: perspective and method*, University of California Press, USA.
Bochner, AP 2012, 'On first-person narrative scholarship: autoethnography as acts of meaning', *Narrative Inquiry*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 155-164.
Bogac, C 2009, 'Place attachment in a foreign settlement', *Journal of Environment Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 267-278.
Bower, M, Conroy & Perz, J 2017, 'Australian homeless persons' experiences of social connectedness, isolation and loneliness', *Health and Social Care in the*

Community, vol. 26, no. 2., pp. e241-e248, viewed 27 February 2020, https://bslibrary.org.au/housing/homelessness/australian-homeless-persons-experiences-social-connectedness-isolation-loneliness-hsc-95668/

Brandt, A 2017, '4 ways that childhood trauma impacts adults: when we bury our feelings we bury who we are', weblog post, 1 June, viewed 13 December 2019, https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/mindful-anger/201706/4-ways-childhood-trauma-impacts-adults?amp

Bruce, A, Beuthin, R, Shields, L, Molzahn, A & Schick-Makaroff, K 2016, 'Narrative research evolving: evolving through narrative research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 15, no. 1, viewed 10 October 2019, https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406916659292

Buhrich, N, Hodder, T & Teeson, M 2003, 'Schizophrenia among homeless people in Inner-Sydney: current prevalence and historical trends', *Journal of Mental Health*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 51-57.

Bullen, JE 2010, 'Governing homelessness: the discursive and institutional construction of homelessness in Australia', PhD thesis, University of Technology Sydney.

Bullen, J 2013, 'Reforming homelessness services: introduction', *Parity*, vol. 26, no. 8, p. 5.

Butina, M 2015, 'A narrative approach to qualitative inquiry', *Clinical Laboratory Science*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 190-196.

Bye, C & Coates, S 2019, 'Down and out at the QVB: homeless hit shopping mecca/Scamming on comfy rd', *Daily Telegraph*, 23 January, pp.1, 4 & 5.

Byrne, A 2005, *Homeless: true stories of life on the streets*, New Holland, NSW.

Chamberlain, C Johnson, G & Robinson, C (eds) 2014, *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW.

Chamberlain, C & MacKenzie, D 2012, in Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011, *Position paper – ABS review of counting the homeless methodology*, cat. no. 2050.0.55.002, ABS, Canberra.

Chamberlain, C & MacKenzie, D 2014, 'Definition and counting: where to now?', in C Chamberlain, G Johnson, & C Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 71-99.

Charmaz, K 2014, *Constructing grounded theory*, 2nd edn, SAGE, UK.

Chartrand, TL & Bargh, JA 1999, 'The chameleon effect: the perception-

behavior link and social interaction', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 76, no. 6, pp. 893-910.
Chase, SE 2013, 'Narrative inquiry: still a field in the making', in NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (eds), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, 4th edn, SAGE, California, USA, pp. 55-84.
Christie, CA, Montrosse, BE & Klein, BM 2005, 'Emergent design evaluation: a case study', *Evaluation and Program Planning*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 271-277.
Clandinin, DJ 2013, *Engaging in narrative inquiry,* Routledge, USA.
Clandinin, DJ & Connelly, FM 2004, *Narrative Inquiry: experience and story in qualitative research*, Jossey-Bass, USA.
Clandinin, DJ & Huber, J 2010, 'Narrative inquiry', in B McGaw, E Baker & PP Peterson (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Education*,3rd edn, Elsevier, New York, USA, pp. 436-441.
Clandinin, DJ & Murphy, MS 2009, 'Comments on Coulter and Smith: Relational ontological commitments in narrative research', *Educational Researcher*, vol. 38, no. 8, pp. 598-602.
Clandinin, DJ, Pushor, D & Orr, AM 2007, 'Navigating sites for narrative inquiry', *Journal of Teacher Education*, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 21-35.
Coates, S & Bye, C 2019, 'Street appeal big drawcard for homeless', *Daily Telegraph*, 24 January, p. 12.
Coleman, A & Fopp, R 2014, 'Homelessness policy: benign neglect or regulation and control?', in C Chamberlain, G Johnson & C Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 11-29.
Combs, BR 2012, 'A study of success factors and strategies that enabled women to overcome homelessness', PhD thesis, Grand Canyon University, USA.
Commonwealth of Australia 2008, *Which Way Home?: a new approach to homelessness*, Green Paper, Federal Government, Canberra.
Commonwealth of Australia 2008, *The road home: a national approach to reducing homelessness*, White Paper, Federal Government, Canberra.
Cooley, CH 1902, *Human nature and social order*, Charles Scribner's Sons, USA.
Cornelius, A 2008, *An investigation into homelessness*, Intern report, Legislative

Assembly, NSW State Parliament, Sydney.
Correia, JR 2011, 'The architecture of homelessness: space, marginality, and exile in modern French and Japanese literature and film', PhD thesis, University of California Riverside, USA.
Coyle, A 2007, 'Discourse analysis', in E Lyons & A Coyle (eds) 2007, *Analysing qualitative data in psychology*, SAGE, UK, p. 98-116.
Cramer, H 2002, 'Engendering homelessness: an ethnographic study of homeless practices in a post-industrial city', PhD thesis, University of Glasgow.
Creswell, JW 2009, *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd edn, SAGE, USA.
Creswell, JW 2013, *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches, 3rd edn,* SAGE, USA.
D'abrera, C 2019, 'Rough sleepers need tough love, not blame game', *Daily Telegraph*, 24 January, p. 13.
Daiute, C 2014, *Narrative inquiry: a dynamic approach*, California, SAGE, USA.
Dancev, D & Ross, A 2014, *Research ethics for counsellors, nurses and social workers*, SAGE, UK.
Darke, J 1994, 'Women and the meaning of home', in R Gilroy & R Woods (eds), 1994, *Housing women*, Routledge, London, UK, pp. 9-25.
Davidson, J, Bondi, L & Smith, M 2007, 'Introduction: geography's emotional turn', in J Davidson, L Bondi & M Smith (eds), Emotional Geographies, Ashgate Publishing, UK, pp. 1-18.
Deardorff, D 2009, *The other within: the genius of deformity in myth, culture and psyche*, Heaven & Earth, Vermont, USA.
de Hoog, J 1972, Skid row dossier, Sun Books, Melbourne, Victoria.
Dekkers, W 2011, 'Dwelling, house and home: towards a home-led perspective on dementia care', *Medicine, Health Care, and Philosophy*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 291-300, viewed 22 October 2019, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3127020/
Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS (eds) 2011, *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*, 4th edn, SAGE, California, USA.
Derham, J & Francis, M 2012, 'Journey to social inclusion: a reflection of one approach to delivering trauma informed case management within the homeless sector', *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 9-10.

Desjarlais, RR 1997, *Shelter blues: sanity and selfhood among the homeless,* Penn Press, USA.
Diinis, E 2009, *Domestic violence: prevalence and response in Australia*, Intern report, Legislative Assembly, NSW State Parliament, Sydney.
Douglass, BG & Moustakas, C 1985, 'Heuristic inquiry: the internal search to know', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, viewed 3 February 2020, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167885253004
Downey, D, Kinane, I & Parker, E 2018, *Landscapes of liminality: between space and place*, Rowman & Littlefield, USA.
Duatre, E 2012, *Being and learning: a poetic phenomenology of education*, Sense, Rotterdam.
Duffy, L 2008, 'Hidden heroines: lone mothers assessing community health using photovoice', *Health Promotion Practice*, vol. 11, no. 6, pp. 788-797.
Dwyer, SC & Buckle, JL 2009, 'The space between: on being an insider-outsider in qualitative research', *International Institute of Qualitative Methodology*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp.54-63.
Dylan, B 1991, *He was a friend of mine*, song, LP, Colombia Records.
Ellis, C & Flaherty, MG (eds) 1992, *Investigating subjectivity: research on lived experience*, SAGE, California, USA.
Ethnographic Realism 2019, *Wikipedia*, viewed 30 September 2019, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnographic_realism
Falzon, J 2011, 'Admiring the homeless'. *Eureka Street,* 14 June, viewed 13 November 2019, https://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article/admiring-the-homeless
Farmer, JE & Eakman, AM, 1995, 'The relationship between neuropsychological functioning and instrumental activities of daily living following acquired brain injury', *Applied Neuropsychology*, vol. 2, pp. 107-115.
Farrell, J 2012, 'Definition of homelessness changes but problems remain', *Deakin Speaking,* weblog post, 13 September, viewed 9 October 2013, https://theconversation.com/amp/definition-of-homelessness-changes-but-problems-remain-9525/
Farrugia, D & Gerrard, J (eds) 2013, 'Introduction: new directions in understanding homelessness', *Parity*, vol. 26, no. 10, p. 4.
FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the

Homeless) 2017, *Recognising the link between trauma and homelessness,* position paper, 27 January, FEANTSA, Brussels, Belgium.
Fetterman, DM 2010, *Ethnography: step-by-step*, 3rd edn, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, California, USA.
Fields, D 2011, 'Emotional refuge? Dynamics of place and belonging among formerly homeless individuals with mental illness', *Emotion, space and society*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 258-267.
Flick, U 2007, 'Homelessness and health: challenges for health psychology', *Journal of Health Psychology*, vol. 12, pp. 691-695.
Flick, U 2014, *An introduction to qualitative research,* 5th edn, SAGE, USA.
Forte, JA 2002, 'Not in my social world: a cultural analysis of media representations, contested spaces, and sympathy for the homeless', *The Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, vol. 29: no. 4, article 9, pp. 131-157.
Frank, AW 2012, 'Practicing dialogical narrative analysis', in JA Holstein & JF Gubrium (eds), *Varieties of narrative analysis*, SAGE, USA, pp. 33-52.
Frank, AW 2013, *The wounded storyteller: body, illness and ethics*, 2nd edn, The University of Chicago Press, USA.
Funston, L 2012, 'Ending long-term homelessness? Why a politicised trauma informed care response is needed', *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 23-24.
Gaetz, S 2010, 'Making knowledge matter: mobilizing homelessness research through the homeless hub'. *Canadian Issues*, pp. 32-35.
Gauther, CC 2010, 'Ethical principles for end-of life decision making', in N Bauer-Malin & D Perry (eds), *Final acts: death, dying, and the choices we make* Rutgers University Press, USA, pp. 220-237.
Gee, JP 2000, 'Identity as an analytic lens for research in education', *Review of Research in Education*, American Educational Research Association, vol. 25, pp. 99-125.
Gerber, L 2018, 'Understanding the nurse's role as a patient advocate', *Nursing 2019,* vol. 48, no. 4, pp. 55-58.
Gerrard, J, 2013, 'Public spaces, private lives: 'visible' homelessness and the public gaze', *Parity,* vol. 26, no. 10, pp. 11-12.
Giakoumelos, P 2017, 'NSW announces law change to move homeless from CBD in National Homelessness Week', SBS News, 8 August, viewed 19 February 2020, https://www.sbs.com.au/news/nsw-announces-law-change-to-

move-homeless-from-cbd-in-national-homelessness-week
Giddens, A 1991, *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age*, Polity, UK.
Giddens, A 2009, *Sociology*, 6th edn, Polity, UK.
Gieryn, TF 2000, 'A space for place in sociology', *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 26, pp. 463-496.
Gieseking, JJ, Mangold, W, Katz, C, Low, S & Saegert, SL (eds) 2014, 'Meanings of home', *The People, Place, and Space Reader*, viewed 22 October 2019, https://peopleplacespace.org/toc/section-5
Gigerenzer, G & Gaissmaier, W 2011, 'Heuristic decision making', *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 62, pp. 451-482.
Gilbert, T 2012 'More than a roof over one's head: ending long-term homelessness', *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 11-13.
Glass, I 2014, '4 lessons from Ira Glass in telling stories the way they are meant to be told', *Story and heart*, viewed 14 September 2016, https://blog.storyandheart.com/blog/2014/2/2/4-lessons-from-ira-glass-in-telling-stories-the-way-theyre-meant-to-be-told#.XIPOc8A7bYU
Goffman, E 1959, *The presentation of self in everyday life*, Anchor Books, USA.
Goffman, E 1963, *Stigma: notes on the management of spoiled identity*, Simon & Schuster, New York, USA.
Goodall, HL 2000, *Writing the new ethnography*, Rowman & Littlefield, USA.
Goodman, L, Saxe, L & Harvey, M 1991, 'Homelessness as psychological trauma: broadening perspectives', *American Psychologist*, vol. 46, no. 11, pp. 1219-1225.
Graziano, AM & Raulin, ML 2013, *Research methods: a process of enquiry*, 8th edn, State University of New York, Buffalo, USA.
Groot, S & Hodgetts, D 2012, 'Homemaking on the streets and beyond', *Community, Work & Family*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 255-271.
Guba, E & Lincoln, Y 1989, *Fourth generation evaluation*, SAGE, USA.
Gutland, L 2012, *"You can't make this stuff up: the complete guide to writing creative nonfiction from memoir to literary journalism and everything in between",* Da Capo Press, USA.
Hall, D 2010, 'A phenomenological inquiry of chronic homeless individuals' challenges to independence', PhD thesis, Walden University, Minnesota, USA.

Hammersley, M & Atkinson, P 2007, *Ethnography: principles in practice*, 3rd edn, Taylor & Francis, UK.
Hanrahan, M, Cooper, T & Burroughs-Lange, S 1999, 'The place of personal writing in a PhD thesis: epistemological and methodological considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 401-416.
Hart, J 2011, *Storycraft: the complete guide to writing narrative nonfiction*, The University of Chicago Press, USA.
Haslam, N, Bain, P, Douge, L, Lee, M & Bastian, B 2005, 'More human than you: attributing humanness to self and others', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 89, no. 6, pp. 937-950.
Haslam, N, Loughnan, S & Holland, E 2013, 'The psychology of humanness', *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation,* vol. 60, pp. 25-50.
Hayden, G, Browne, G & van der Riet, P 2018, 'Narrative inquiry as a research methodology exploring person centred care in nursing', *Collegian: The Australian Journal of Nursing Practice, Scholarship and Research*, February, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 125-129.
Healey-Ogden, MJ & Austin, WJ 2010, 'Uncovering the lived experience of well-being', *Qualitative Health Research*, vol.21, no.1, pp.85-96.
Heuristic 2019, *Wikipedia*, viewed 21 October 2019, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heuristic
Hodgetts, D, Radley, A, Chamberlain, K & Hodgetts A, 2007, 'Health inequalities and homelessness: considering material, spatial and relational dimensions', *Journal of Health Psychology*, vol. 12, no. 5, p. 709-725.
Holstein, JA & Gubrium, JF 2012, *Varieties of narrative analysis,* SAGE, California, USA.
Homelessness Australia 2013, *Homelessness in Australia,* April, viewed 7 August 2014, www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/images/publications/Fact_Sheets/Homelessness_in_Australia_v2.pdf
Homelessness Australia 2013, '*What is homelessness: there is no one definition of homelessness'*, fact sheet, 9 October, viewed 14 November 2019, http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/index.php/about-homelessness
Homelessness NSW n.d., Mental illness and homelessness, viewed 13

February 2020, https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/resources/mental-illness-and-homelessness
Hopwood, J 2009, *Hansard*, Legislative Assembly, State Parliament, Sydney, NSW, https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Hansard/Pages/HansardResult.aspx#/docid/HANSARD-1323879322-65304
Hornsby Advocate 1924, *Report*, 18 July.
Horsdal, M 2012, *Telling lives: exploring dimensions of narratives*, Routledge, UK.
Horvath, M 2011, 'Invisible people', *Homeless Hub*, weblog post, viewed 25 January 2021, www.homelesshub.ca
Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 2008, *Homelessness is a human rights issue*, Federal Government, Australia.
Hunt, J 2013, 'Why do poor people sometimes make decisions that make their situation worse?', paper presented at World Economic Forum, *Meeting the Champions of China*, weblog post, viewed 13 November 2013, https://fittedforwork.org/blog/why-do-poor-people-sometimes-make-decisions-that-make-their-situaion-worse/
Hwang, SW, Colantonio, A, Chui, S, Tolomiczenko, G, Kiss, A, Cowan, L, Redelmeier, DA & Levinson, W 2008, '*The effect of traumatic brain injury on the health of homeless people'*, CMAJ (Journal of the Canadian Medical Association), 7 October, vol.179, no. 8, pp. 779-784.
James-Nevell, S 2012, 'Long-term homelessness and social inclusion', *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 19-20.
Johnson, G, Gronda, H & Coutts, S 2008, *On the outside: pathways in and out of homelessness*, Australian Scholarly, North Melbourne, Victoria.
Johnson, G & Jacobs, K 2014, 'Theorising Cause', in C Chamberlain, G Johnson & C Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 30-46.
Johnson-Medland, NT 2011, *Danse macabre: thoughts on death and memento mori from a hospice chaplain*, Imprint, USA.
Johnstone, M, Jetten, J, Dingle, GA, Parsell, C & Walter, ZC 2015, 'Discrimination and well-being amongst the homeless: the role of multiple group

membership', *Frontiers in Psychology*, pp. 1-9, viewed 10 January 2020, https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00739/full
Justice Connect 2016, *'Moving homeless people on is not a solution'*, Justice Connect, position paper, 2 August, viewed 19 February 2020, https://justiceconnect.org.au/moving-homeless-people-on-is-not-a-solution
Karp, B 2011, *The girl's guide to homelessness: a memoir*, Harlequin, USA.
Katz, M 1989, *The undeserving poor: from the war on poverty to the war on welfare*, New York, Pantheon, USA.
Keene, N 2011, 'Cold and so alone', *Daily Telegraph*, 16 June, p. 11.
Kennett, P 1999, 'Homelessness, citizenship and social exclusion', in P Kennett & A Marsh (eds) 1999, *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain*, The Policy Press, UK, pp. 37-60.
Kennett, P & Marsh, A (eds) 1999, *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain*, The Policy Press, UK.
Keylon, B 1993, 'Stigmas of the homeless: a study maintaining an identity of self-worth', Master of Arts thesis, Southern Illinois University, USA.
Khan, S 2020, 'Erving Goffman, The Presentation of self in Everyday Life (1959)', *Public Culture*, vol. 2, no. 91, pp. 397-404.
Kristeva, J, 1982, *Powers of horror: an essay on abjection*, Colombia University Press, USA.
Lafferty, J 2019, 'My cave, or yours', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September, p. 14.
Lakin, JL, Jefferis, VE, Cheng, CM & Chartrand, TL 2003, 'The chameleon effect as social glue: evidence for the evolutionary significance of nonconscious mimicry', *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, vol. 27, pp. 145-162.
Layder, D 2013, *Doing excellent small-scale research*, SAGE, USA.
Lemert, C 2012, *Social things: an introduction to the sociological life*, 5th edn, Rowman & Littlefield, USA.
'Liminal' 2020, in Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Massachusetts, USA, viewed 20 February 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/liminal
Liminality 2019, *Wikipedia*, viewed 20 November 2019, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liminality
Linde, C 2001, 'Narrative and tacit social knowledge', *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Special Issue on Tacit Knowledge, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 160-170.

Livingston, D 2010, 'The visual narrative: alternative photographic exposures', *Social Alternatives*, vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 3-8.
Maguire, NJ, Johnson, R, Vostanis, P, Keats, H, & Remington, RE 2009, 'Homelessness and complex trauma: a review of the literature', *University of Southampton Institutional Repository*, 1 December, viewed 14 December 2019, https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/69749/
Main, TJ 1994, 'Bringing the individual back in: structural and personal factors as causes of homelessness', PhD thesis, Princeton University, USA.
Majer, M., Nater, UM, Lin, JM, Capuron, L & Reeves, WC 2010, '*Association of childhood trauma with cognitive function in healthy adults: a pilot study'*, viewed 20 December 2019, http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2377/10/61
Mallett, S 2004, 'Understanding home: a critical review of the literature', *The Sociological Review*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 62-89.
Mangan, D 2017, 'Understandings of identities among students from forced migrant backgrounds: a dialogical narrative analysis', Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology thesis, University of Manchester.
Marsh, A & Kennett, P 1999, 'Exploring the new terrain', in P Kennett & A Marsh (eds) 1999, *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain*, The Policy Press, UK, pp. 1-16.
Marshall, C & Rossman, GB 2006, *Designing qualitative research*, SAGE, USA.
Martin, R 2014, 'Gender and homelessness', in C Chamberlain, G Johnson & C Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 100-116.
Mason, J 2002, *Qualitative researching*, 2nd edn, SAGE, California, USA.
Masterton, JF (ed.) 2005, *The personality disorders through the lens of attachment theory and the neurobiologic development of the self: a clinical integration*, Zeig, Tucker & Theisen, USA.
McAdams, DP & McLean, KC 2013, 'Narrative identity', *Current Directions in Psychological Science, vol.22, no.3, pp. 233-238.*
McNally, L 2017, 'Sydney homeless evicted from Martin Place by council for being 'public nuisance'', *ABC News*, 24 June, viewed 19 February 2020, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-24/homeless-evicted-from-martin-place-for-being-public-nuisance/8648774
McNamara, B 2001, *Fragile lives: death, dying and care*, Allen & Unwin, NSW,

Australia.
McNaughton, C 2006, ‘Agency, structure and biography: charting transitions through homelessness in late modernity’, *Auto/Biography*, vol.14, pp. 134-152.
McNaughton, C 2008, *Transitions through homelessness: lives on the edge*, Palgrave Macmillan, UK.
Mellor, M 2001, ‘Messy method: the unfolding story’, *Educational Action Research*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 465-484.
Miller, AB & Keys, CB 2001, ‘Understanding dignity in the lives of homeless persons’, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 331-354.
Min, E (ed.) 1999, *Reading the homeless: the media’s image of homeless culture*, Praeger, USA.
Mitcheli, G, ‘The industry time forgot’, in P Troy (ed.) 2000, *A history of European housing in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, UK, pp. 77-85.
Moore, G, Manias, E & Gerdtz, MF 2011, ‘Complex health service needs for people who are homeless’, *Australian Health Review*, vol. 35, pp. 480-485.
Moriarty, D 2019, ‘Why battling homelessness is worth gamble’, *Illawarra Mercury*, 1 July, p. 12.
Moser, PK 1987, ‘Propositional knowledge’, *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 52, pp. 91-114.
Muller, RM 2014, ‘Fragmented child: disorganized attachment and dissociation’, *Talking About Trauma: Psychology Today*, weblog post, 20 June, viewed 30 July 2014, https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/talking-about-trauma/201406/fragmented-child-disorganized-attachment-and-dissociation
Munro, K 2013, ‘The cold reality of homelessness bites deep on winter streets’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27-28 July, p. 14.
Narrative Inquiry 2019, *Wikipedia*, viewed 30 September 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrative_inquiry
Narrative Inquiry 2020, vol. 30, no. 1, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Netherlands.
Neilsen, L 2008, ‘Lyric inquiry’, in JG Knowles & AL Cole 2008, *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: perspectives, methodologies, examples*, and issues, SAGE, USA, pp. 93-102.
Oberin, J & Mitra-Kahn, T 2013, ‘Stopping violence before it occurs: responding

to the pathways into gendered homelessness', *Parity*, vol. 26, no. 7, pp. 15-17.
O'Connell, JJ, Oppenheimer, S.C, Judge, C.M, Taube, R.L, & Blanchfield, B, et al. 2010, 'The Boston health care for homeless program: a public health framework', *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 100.8*, pp. 1400-1408.
Openminds 2019, The connection between homelessness and mental health, 5 August, viewed 13 February 2020, https://openminds.org.au/news/connection-between-homelessness-and-mental-health
Osuji, J 2009, 'Understanding the experience of exiting homelessness among women without children', PhD thesis, University of Calgary.
Pailthorpe, BC 2017, 'Emergent design', *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, 7 November, viewed 3 October 2019, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0081
Park, NW & Ingles, JL 2001, 'Effectiveness of attention rehabilitation after an acquired brain injury: a meta-analysis', *Neuropsychology*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 199-210
Parsell, C 2008, 'Problematising the 'homeless identity': considering people beyond their homelessness'*, 3rd Annual Australasian Housing Researchers' Conference,* 18-20 June, AHRC08, pp. 1-13.
Parsell, C 2009, 'Representations about, and voices from, people who are homeless'. *Parity*, vol. 22, no. 7, pp. 36-38.
Parsell, C 2010a, 'An ethnographic study of the day-to-day lives and identities of people who are homeless in Brisbane', PhD thesis, The University of Queensland.
Parsell, C 2010b, '"Homeless is what I am, not who I am": insights from an inner-city Brisbane study', *Urban Policy Research*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 181-194.
Parsell, C 2011, 'Researching 'street to home' in the Australian context', Parity, vol. 24, no. 9, pp. 21-23.
Parsell, C 2012, 'Home is where the house is: the meaning of home for people sleeping rough', *Housing Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp.159-173.
Parsell, C 2014, 'Chronic homelessness: a political and moral priority', in C, Chamberlain, G, Johnson & C, Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 233-252.
Parsell, C 2017, 'Don't respond to injustice by bringing in the cops to Martin Place', *Sydney Morning Herald,* 8 August.

Parsell, C 2018, *The homeless person in contemporary society*, Routledge Focus, Australia.
Parsell, C, Clarke, A, & Vorsina, M, 2019, 'Evidence for an integrated healthcare and psychosocial multidisciplinary model to address rough sleeping', *Health and Social Care in the Community*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 34-41.
Parsell, C & Marston, G 2012, 'Beyond the 'at risk' individual: housing and the eradication of poverty to prevent homelessness', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 71, no. 1, pp. 33-44.
Parsell, C & Parsell, M 2012, 'Homelessness as a choice', *Housing, Theory and Society*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 420-434.
Parsell, C, Petersen, M & Culhane, DP 2016, 'Cost offsets of supportive housing: evidence in social work' *British Journal of Social Work*, vol. 2016, pp. 1-20.
Pederson, P, Anderson, P & Curtis, T 2012, 'Social relations and experiences of social isolation among socially marginalized people', *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, vol. 29, no. 6, pp. 839-858.
Phipps, M, Dalton, L, Maxwell, H, & Cleary, M, 2018, 'Women and homelessness, a complex multidimensional issue: findings from a scoping review', *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 15 October, viewed 22 October 2019, https://doi.org/10.1080/10530789.2018.1534427
Pickering, M 2001, *Stereotyping: the politics of representation*, Palgrave, USA.
Plano Clark, VL & Badiee, M 2010, 'Research questions in mixed methods research', in A Tashakkori & C Teddlie (eds), *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*, 2nd edn, SAGE, USA, pp. 275-304.
Pluck, G., Lee, KH, David, R, Macleod, DC, Spence, SA & Parks, R.W 2011, 17 February, 'Neurobehavioural and cognitive function is linked to childhood trauma in homeless adults', *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 33-45.
Polanyi, M 1996, *The tacit dimension*. The University of Chicago, USA.
Punch, KF 2013, *Introduction to social research: quantitative and qualitative approaches*, 3rd edn, SAGE, UK.
Raine, S 2013, 'The narrative turn: interdisciplinary methods and perspectives, *The Journal of the National Association of Student Anthropologists*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 64-80.

Riessman, CR 2008, *Narrative methods for the human sciences,* SAGE, Boston, USA.
Reynolds, F 2014, 'Homelessness is not a diagnosis', *South Sydney Herald*, 4 February, viewed 20 June 2019, https://southsydneyherald.com.au/homelessness-is-not-a-diagnosis/
Richardson, L, 'Narrative and sociology', in J Van Maanen (ed.) 1995, *Representation in ethnography*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, USA, pp.198-221.
Richmond, T 2019, 'Talking history: the river and the hill, united Australia; the soul of Kendall; flowing patiently on', unpublished manuscripts, Brooklyn, NSW.
Ricketson, M 2014, *Telling true stories: navigating the challenges of writing narrative non-fiction,* Allen & Unwin, Sydney, Australia.
Robinson, C 2003, 'Understanding iterative homelessness: the case of people with mental disorders', final paper, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne.
Robinson, C 2011, *Beside one's self: homelessness felt and lived*, Syracuse University Press, USA.
Robinson, C 2012, 'Long-term homelessness, long-term trauma', *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 21-22.
Rock, P 2007, 'Symbolic interactionism and ethnography', in P Atkinson, A Coffey, S Delamont, J Lofland & L Lofland (eds), *Handbook of ethnography*. London, SAGE, UK, pp. 26-38.
Ross, H 2019, 'Byron Bay's illegal campers draw ire of native title holders, authorities', *ABC NEWS*, 30 October, viewed 30 October 2019, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-30/byron-bay-homeless-going-bush-to-find-a-better-life/11650904
Riley, T & Hawe, P 2005, 'Researching practice; the methodological case for narrative inquiry', *Oxford Academic/Health Education Research*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 226-236.
Saldana, J 2013, *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*, 2nd edn, SAGE, USA.
Saleh, M, Menon, J & Clandinin, DJ 2014, 'Autobiographical narrative inquiry: tellings and retellings', *LEARNing Landscapes*, vol. 7, no. 2, Spring.
Sandman, L 2005, *A good death: on the value of death and dying*, Open University Press, UK.

Santayana, G 1922, *Soliloquies in England and later soliloquies*, Scribner's, USA.
SBS NEWS 2020, 'One in eight Australian adults, one in six kids are living in poverty', *SBS NEWS*, viewed 21 February 2020, https://www.sbs.com.au/news/one-in-eight-australian-adults-one-in-six-kids-are-living-in-poverty
Schneider, DA, Cretella, J, Ranaudo, S, Constantino, D & Cota, CF 2009, 'Voices should be heard: what personal stories of homelessness teach us about practice', *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, vol. 100, no. 3, pp. 317-327.
Schratz, M & Walker, R 1995, *Research as social change: new opportunities for qualitative research,* Routledge, UK.
Schwalbe, M 2019, The spirit of Blumer's method as a guide to sociological discovery, *Symbolic Interaction*, 5 December, viewed 22 January 2021, https://doi-org.ezproxy.uow.edu.au/10.1002/symb.469
Scutella, R & Wooden, M 2014, 'The dynamics of homelessness', in C Chamberlain, G Johnson & C Robinson (eds), *Homelessness in Australia: an introduction*, UNSW Press Sydney, NSW, pp. 48-68.
Simon, K 2009, April, *Homelessness in NSW,* NSW Parliamentary Library, Research Service Briefing Paper No 03/09, NSW Parliament, Sydney, NSW.
Smith, GP 2018, *Out of the forest: the true story of a recluse* Penguin Random House, Australia.
Snow, DA & Anderson, L 1987, 'Identity work among the homeless: the verbal construction and avowal of personal identities', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 96, no. 6, pp.1336-1371.
Snow, DA, Anderson, L & Koegel, P 1994, 'Distorting tendencies in research on the homeless', *The American Behavioral Scientist (1986-1994)*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 461-475.
Spradley, JP 1979, *The ethnographic interview*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, Fort Worth, Texas, USA.
Suzuki, A, Poon, L, Kumari, V & Cleare, AJ 2015, 'Fear biases in emotional face processing following childhood trauma as a marker of resilience and vulnerability to depression', *Child Maltreatment*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 240-250.
The Big Issue 2012, '*When people go missing: the empty spaces left behind*', 9-

22 October, The Big Issue, Victoria, Australia.
Thiselton, A, 2009, *Hermeneutics: an introduction*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, USA.
Thomas, B 2016, *Narrative: the basics,* Routledge, UK.
Thomas, S 2012, 'Narrative inquiry: embracing the possibilities', *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 206-221.
Thomson, P & Gunter, H 2011, 'Inside, outside, upside down: the fluidity of academic researcher 'identity' on working with/in school', *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 17-30.
Towers, J, Takeuchi, MA, Hall, J & Martin, LC 2017, *Understanding emotions in mathematical thinking and learning*, Elsevier, USA.
Tubaro, P, Ryan, L & d'Angelo, A 2016, 'The visual sociogram in qualitative and mixed-methods research', *Sociological Research Online*, SAGE Publications, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 1-21.
Tully, TL 1997*,* 'On being homeless: women's sense of connection', Master of Science thesis, University of Toronto, Canada.
Turner, VW 1974, *Dramas, fields, and metaphors: symbolic action in human society,* Cornell University Press, New York, USA.
United Nations 2015, '*Homelessness and the right to adequate housing: questionnaire*', submission by UN-Habitat12, November, pp. 1-6.
Van Maanen, J 1988, *Tales of the field: on writing ethnography*, University of Chicago, USA.
Van Maanen, J (ed.) 1995, *Representation in ethnography,* SAGE, Thousand Oaks, USA.
van Manen, M 1990, *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*, Althouse, Canada.
Von Franz, M-L 1974, *Shadow and evil in fairytales*, Spring, USA.
Walter, ZC, Jetten, J, Parsell, C & Dingle, GA 2015, 'The impact of self-categorizing as "homeless" on well-being and service use', *Analyses of social issues and public policy*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 333-356.
Warne, T & McAndrew, S 2009, 'Constructing a bricolage of nursing research, education and practice', *Nurse Education Today*, vol. 29, no. 8, pp. 855-858.
Watson, J 2013, 'Homelessness, gender-based violence and social capital: the function of sexual alliances', *Parity*, vol. 26, no. 10, pp. 13-14.

Watson, R 2006, ‘Tacit knowledge’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 23, pp. 2-3.
Watson, S 1999, ‘A home is where the heart is: engendering notions of homelessness’, in P Kennett & A Marsh (eds), *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain,* The Policy Press, UK, pp. 81-100.
Webster, L & Mertova, P 2007, *Using narrative inquiry as a research method*, Routledge, USA.
Wilson, HS & Hutchinson, SA 1991, ‘Triangulation of qualitative methods: Heideggerian hermeneutics and grounded theory’, *Qualitative Health Research*, 1991, vol. 1, p. 263-276.
Wolcott, HF, ‘Making a study “more ethnographic”’, in J Van Maanen, (ed.) 1995, *Representation in ethnography*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, USA, pp. 79-111.
World Health Organisation 1998, *Health promotion glossary,* Division of Health Promotion, Education and Communications, Geneva, Switzerland.
Wylie, N 2012, ‘Journey to social inclusion: writing a new story’, *Parity*, vol. 25, no. 5, p. 29.
Yin, RK 2015, *Qualitative research from start to finish*, 2nd edn, The Guilford Press, New York, USA.
Zamenopoulos, T & Alexiou, K 2020, ‘Collective design anticipation’, *Futures*, vol. 120, no. 102563, pp. 1-13.
Zlatev, J, Racine, TP, Sinha, C & Itkonen, E 2008, ‘Intersubjectivity: what makes us human?’, in J Zlatev, TP Racine, C Sinha & E Itkonen (eds), *The shared mind: perspectives of intersubjection*, Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 1-14.
Zufferey, C 2004, ‘Service user perspectives: representations, rhetoric and realities’, paper, School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy, University of South Australia.
Zufferey, C & Chung, D 2006, December, ‘Representations of homelessness in the Australian print media: some implications for social policy’, *Just Policy*, no. 42, pp. 32-38.
Zufferey, C & Kerr, L 2010, ‘Identity and everyday experiences of homelessness: some implications for social work’, *Australian Social Work*, vol. 57, no. 4, 343-353.

Appendices

Appendix 1

1. Participant consent form and information sheet

Avondale
COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Principal Investigator: Judy Hopwood **Student Number**: 10161619

Email: judith.hopwood@gmail.com **Date**: 10 December 2013

Research Title: LIVED EXPERIENCE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE IN ONE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

I agree to participate in the above research project and I give my consent freely.

I have read and understand the information provided in the Information Statement.

I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have been given to keep.

I understand I can withdraw from the project at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing. I will not be disadvantaged in any way by withdrawing.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them **answered** to my satisfaction.

I consent to:

- Answer questions about my life story
- Participate in an informal interview
- Participate in a formal interview where the questions will be guided
- Draw a picture

I understand that my personal information will remain confidential to the researchers.

This research project has been approved by the Avondale College of Higher Education Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Avondale requires that all participants are informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted it may be given to the researcher, or if an independent person is preferred, to Avondale's HREC Secretary, Avondale College of Higher Education, PO Box 19, Cooranbong NSW 2265, or phone (02) 4980 2121 or fax (02) 49802117 or email: research.ethics@avondale.edu.au.

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Contact details:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____

Lived Experience of Homeless People in One Local Government Area *Page 1 of 1*

Avondale
COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Judy Hopwood **Student Number**: 10161619 **Email**: judith.hopwood@gmail.com

Date:

Project Title: LIVED EXPERIENCE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE IN ONE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

You are being invited to participate in this research project that is being conducted by Judy Hopwood. Judy is a Doctor of Philosophy student in the Faculty of Education at Avondale College and her research project is being supervised by Dr Phil Fitzsimmons and Dr Don Roy. The results will be placed in a thesis document.

The purpose of her study is to discover aspects of the lived experience of being homeless in the Hornsby Local Government Area {LGA}.

A number of homeless people have been asked to participate from a number of different places around the Local Government Area. All these people will be over the age of eighteen years, and up to half will be women. If you agree to participate, you will be asked about your life story and also about being homeless. An informal interview and a guided interview will be conducted so that similar questions can be asked of all the participants. You may give as much information in your answers as you feel able to. You will also be asked to draw something on a piece of paper that will be provided.

Given that information told to the researcher may vary in length from person to person, and not wishing to limit some people who have a great deal to contribute, the time required for the research is likely to be one to two hours or thereabouts.

The researcher will conduct the research in your direct area to ensure that you are the most comfortable you can be. Should you have any concerns or alternate suggestions about this please do hesitate to make these known.

It is hoped that the research will provide a unique insight into your experiences of being homeless and that the completed research can be used to address aspects of your lives that could be improved, for example, by changes to government policies.

All names will be removed from the data and you will be allocated a different name to your own that will be used for all observations, interviews and documents. The data will be in a locked cabinet in the possession of the researcher for five years. After this time it will be destroyed.

The information collected will be analysed and reported in a thesis. Confidentiality of individual participants will be assured. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you q:mnot be identified. Participants will be able to read the information collected about them and will be able to comment. These comments will also form part of the data collected.

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only people who give their informed consent and sign the Consent Form will be included in the study. Even if you agree and sign the form you may withdraw at any time without giving a reason. If you decide not to participate, or wish to withdraw from the project at any time, you will not be disadvantaged.

Please read this information statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. After you have read this information, Judy will personally discuss it with you further. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, you can contact the researcher.

If you would like to participate please read the Consent Form and sign. DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

Should you like further information please contact Judy or Dr Phil Fitzsimmons on (02) 4980 2222.

Should you require help to contact Judy or Dr Fitzsimmons please do not hesitate to ask.

This research project has been approved by the Avondale College of Higher Education Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Avondale requires that all participants are informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted it may be given to the researcher, or if an independent person is preferred, to Avondale's HREC Secretary, Avondale College of Higher Education, PO Box 19, Cooranbong NSW 2265, or phone (02) 4980 2121 or fax (02) 49802117 or email: research.ethics@avondale.edu.au.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Yours sincerely,

Judy Hopwood, Principal Investigator

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Dr Phil Fitzsimmons, Principal Supervisor

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

2. Interviewee consent form

TO: [redacted] DATE: 21/7/16

RE: CONSENT TO USE MY INTERVIEW/WRITTEN NOTES

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Judy

I hereby give permission for Judy Hopwood, PhD Candidate at Avondale College, to use comments made in my interviews (recorded or otherwise), plus any words written by me in relation to the subject of homelessness, in her thesis on the subject of homelessness.

Yours sincerely

NAME: [redacted]

SIGNATURE: [redacted]

DATE: 21/7/16

Appendix 3

3. Consent forms for use of photographs

AVONDALE COLLEGE

PhD CANDIDATE Judy Hopwood

16 October 2013

RE: PERMISSION TO SHOW PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT A WEDDING

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby give permission to Judy Hopwood to show photographs taken at my wedding at Upper McKell Park on Sunday 15 September to Avondale staff as part of the process for Judy to undertake her studies at Avondale College. The photos will be used for study purposes only.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

SIGNATURE: [redacted]

Date: 22.10.13

2 December 2014

FROM: Judy Hopwood

[redacted]

RE: USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE AVONDALE DOCTORAL RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED BY JUDY HOPWOOD

[redacted]

This letter is to re-affirm the possession of photographs taken by you, [redacted] in the Brooklyn region can be given to and used by Judy Hopwood in the undertaking of her research.

"We hereby give our permission that any photographs taken by us can be in the possession of, and used by Judy Hopwood in the course of her research and within the document that will become her thesis for her Doctoral studies at Avondale College."

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Appendix 4

4. Table listing data collection (for dialogical narrative analysis)

TYPES OF DATA	DURATION OF COLLECTION	COMMENTS
RESIDING IN THE SITE	July/Aug/Sept 2014 - 6 weeks Nov 2014 – 3 weeks Feb/March 2015 – 4 weeks May 2015 – 2 weeks	Stayed in the local motel that was walking distance to the site
VISITS TO THE SITE	Numerous over the course of the study	One example was sitting in on the television interview
REFLECTIVE JOURNAL	Observations, thoughts, feelings, beliefs about interactions	Contributed to the stories
REFLECTIVE NOTEBOOK	'In-the-field' observations – not direct contact but noting movements and incidents	Objective input into the site and its functioning
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS (informal interviews with B and W)	First – 14 July, 2014 Second – 3 August, 2014 Third – 25 August 2014	Interviews recorded and then transcribed
CONVERSATIONS AND INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS	These usually accompanied the visits to the site	Recorded in the Reflective Journal
PERSONAL DIARY TO PARTICIPANTS	Provided to the participants at the commencement of the study	Participants did not write in the diaries
DRAW ON A PIECE OF PAPER (PARTICIPANTS)	Provided at the commencement of the study	Participants did not use their art supplies
DISPOSABLE CAMERAS TO PARTICIPANTS	Provided a few months into the study	B very keen about the cameras and used hers (4 in total) W did not use his
CONVERSATION WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS	TR – 12 Jan 2015 JJJ – 23 July 2015 JA – 2 Oct 2015	All related to Brooklyn and significant to the participants
PRE-DATA INCLUSIONS	Commenced from 1980s and continued sporadically until the study began	Provided essential substrate to the research aims

HAIKU

by Holly Rasmussen

I am not myself
I'm what you want me to be
I'm chameleon

December 2019